

Sola Scriptura proof texts: A Bible Doctrine!

"When men throw out traditions and creeds and start to use the Bible only, they begin a journey where they know the vehicle in which they ride, but know not the route truth leads. Scripture alone lights the one pathway in the darkness, and although we may only see a short distance ahead, even surprised at times by the route, we know the final destination is paradise. Let the Holy Spirit guide you with scripture to your heavenly home!" (Steve Rudd)

● [Worship with a church that uses the Bible only in your own home town!](#)



Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!

- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)
- [Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- [Pro-Tradition arguments refuted!](#)

Introduction:

A. Sola Scriptura is taught in scripture:

1. We invite all those who rely on the organization to interpret the Bible for them including Orthodox, Catholics, and their [twin organization, the Jehovah's Witnesses](#), to think for themselves. If you have the intelligence to read the newspaper, why not the Bible?
2. We are in a difficult position with Catholics, Orthodox and Watchtower believers alike, because when we point out the verses that prove sola Scriptura is taught in scripture, they don't believe they can understand the Bible without their church interpreting it for them... and they say sola Scriptura is not taught in the Bible. What an amazing system of circular deception the Catholic, Orthodox and Brooklyn New York, churches have invented.
3. Sola Scriptura means that you use the Bible alone for doctrine. This means Catholics and Orthodox need not appeal to their contradictory oral church traditions and Jehovah's Witnesses need not rely upon the [Watchtower magazine to interpret](#) the Bible for them.

B. Catholics and Orthodox claim Sola Scriptura not taught in the Bible itself and is unscriptural.

"the doctrine of sola Scriptura is not scriptural." ... "The idea of sola Scriptura was an invention of the sixteenth century." (THE WAY: What Every Protestant Should Know About the Orthodox Church, Clark Carlton, 1997, p 117, p 91)

1. On this page, is all the proof you need to know that both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches are wrong, because you will see for yourself, that Sola Scriptura is a Bible doctrine.

2. See also: [The apostolic fathers taught Sola Scriptura.](#)



Sola Scriptura Power texts

Quick Reference

www.Bible.ca



1 Cor 4:6: [Click for detailed outline.](#) Jesus said, "upon this rock I will build My church" and Paul warned: "in building the church, **do not exceed scripture!**"



Luke 1:1-4: [Click for detailed outline.](#) Luke begins by mentioning uninspired gospels by Christians, then the oral tradition of the apostles and concludes that scripture alone will allow Theophilus to **know for certain** what the truth is.



Matthew 4:1-11. Three times Jesus was tempted by the Devil and each time Jesus replied exactly the same **three dangerous words** that defeated the Devil: "**IT IS WRITTEN**" Read it for yourself! If any one could have used oral tradition, it was Jesus, yet he chose the only safe and sure way to defeat Satan: Scripture. We just wish that the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches held scripture alone in the same high regard!

2 Timothy 3:16-17: No matter how traditionalists twist it, it still says that scripture alone is all-sufficient to **equip us for EVERY good work.**



"2 Timothy 3:16-17 doesn't say the Bible is all sufficient by itself."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)

"How could 2 Timothy 3:16 teach the all-sufficiency of scripture, when several New Testament books were not even written yet?"

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



Luke 10:26: "What is written in the Law? **How does it read to you?**" Jesus expected even his enemies to correctly interpret the Bible by simply reading and studying it. Unlike Jesus, Catholics and Orthodox don't ask you what **you** think

scripture says, they just tell you how their church interprets it and you have no choice but to accept what they tell you.



Acts 17:11-12: Even though the apostles were inspired with genuine oral revelation, they always directed people to the scriptures for the final determination of truth. Oral tradition is worthless without the witness of scripture! Unlike the apostles, Catholics and Orthodox would never send you to scripture, since they don't think you can even understand it!

I. The example of Jesus: Quoted scripture, never tradition:

A. Jesus defeated the three temptations of the Devil with, "it is written", not "I say". Mt 4:1-11

1. **The Temptation of Jesus:** Matthew 4:1-11. Three times Jesus was tempted by the Devil and each time Jesus replied exactly the same **three dangerous words** that defeated the Devil: **"IT IS WRITTEN"** Read it for yourself! If any one could have used oral tradition, it was Jesus, yet he chose the only safe and sure way to defeat Satan: Scripture. We just wish that the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches held scripture alone in the same high regard!
2. Traditionalists have simply not comprehended just how devastating it is that Jesus never appealed to his own authority in his 40 days temptation in the wilderness with the Devil.
3. Three times Jesus was tempted, three times Jesus replied, "It is written".
4. If oral tradition, or the authority of the church was valid, then Jesus would have at least one time referred to oral tradition, or used himself as the authority, as the Catholics, Orthodox and JW's use the church organization as an authority.

B. Never did Jesus refer to oral tradition to prove or defend truth.

1. Never does Jesus refer to oral traditions in a positive way.
2. Every time he defends truth he refers to the scriptures.
3. The only times Jesus referred to Oral traditions, was condemning them: 'But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.' "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men." He was also saying to them, "You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. "For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother, is to be put to death'; but you say, 'If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is to say, given to God),' you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that." (Mark 7:7-13)

C. Jesus made over 100 references to scripture. Jesus never relies upon oral traditions but scripture alone. Let's follow the Lord's pattern of relying upon scripture!

1. "Have you not read" Matthew 12:3
2. "have you not read in the Law" Matthew 12:5
3. "Did you never read in the Scriptures" Matthew 21:42

D. Jesus expected the scriptures to be understood by the average man, even his enemies:

1. "What is written in the Law? **How does it read to you?**" (Luke 10:26)
2. Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason **you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures** or the power of God? (Mark 12:24)
3. But Jesus answered and said to them, "**You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures** nor the power of God. (Matthew 22:29)
4. "The Son of Man is to go, **just as it is written of Him**" There were any oral traditions as to who the messiah was. All were wrong! Some thought he was merely a king, some merely a prophet, some merely a priest! (Matthew 26:24)
5. "**What then is this that is written:** 'The stone which the builders rejected, This became the chief corner stone'?" (Luke 20:17)
6. "You **search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life**; it is these that testify about Me (John 5:39)
7. "**How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled**, which say that it must happen this way?" (Matthew 26:54)

II. The example of the apostles using Sola Scriptura:

A. Even though the apostles were inspired with genuine oral revelation, they always directed people to the scriptures for the final determination of truth. Oral tradition is worthless without the witness of scripture!

1. And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures (Acts 17:2)
2. Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see* whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men. (Acts 17:11-12)
3. "Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." (Acts 18:28)

B. Scriptures were read in the churches every Lord's Day:

1. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. (1 Timothy 4:13)

III. Powerful Sola Scriptura proof texts:

A. Abide only within scripture to the exclusion of oral tradition: 1 Corinthians 4:6

1. Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so **that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written**, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other. 1 Corinthians 4:6
2. Jesus said, "upon this rock I will build My church" and Paul warned: "in building the church, do not exceed scripture!"



3. [Click for detailed outline](#) on 1 Cor 4:6 to prove sola Scriptura!

B. Scripture is understandable, even by young children:

1. **"from childhood you have known the sacred writings** which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:15
2. "if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, **when you read you can understand** my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; Ephesians 3:2-5
3. "For we write nothing else to you than **what you read and understand**, and I hope you will understand until the end" 2 Corinthians 1:13

C. Scripture alone is all-sufficient for life, morality, conduct and doctrine:

1. "All Scripture is inspired by God and **profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness**; so that the man of God may be adequate, **equipped for every good work**." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#) "2 Timothy 3:16-17 doesn't say the Bible is all sufficient by itself."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#) "How could 2 Timothy 3:16 teach the all-sufficiency of scripture, when several New Testament books were not even written yet?"

2. "I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, *I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself* in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth." 1 Timothy 3:14-15
3. "seeing that **His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness**, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." 2 Peter 1:3-4
4. My little children, I am writing these things to you **so that you may not sin**. 1 John 2:1

D. The Gospel of John, by itself, is sufficient to bring about saving faith in Christ without oral traditions and the other three gospels! Actually, this may be true of each of the four gospels, although it is only stated by John:

1. Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written **so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**; and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:30-31)

E. Scripture alone is all-sufficient for complete hope, joy and assurance of salvation without any oral tradition:

1. For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have **hope**. (Romans 15:4)
2. These things we write, so that our **joy** may be made complete. 1 John 1:4
3. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have **eternal life**. 1 John 5:13

F. Scripture is the standard to which oral tradition may not be added:

Although Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders dismiss Rev 22:18 as applying only to the single book of revelation, these four texts prove it is a principle that applies to the whole Bible. Notice also that God knew that Revelation was the last book of the 66 book canon and that the warning not to add or take away from scripture **is at the very end of the very last book of the canon**. This simply cannot be coincidence but is God's eternal warning not to use oral traditions in addition to scripture! Although Revelation was not always placed in its current position at the end of the Bible, everyone always realized that it was the last book written.

1. "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book." Revelation 22:18-19
2. "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." Deuteronomy 4:2
3. "Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it." Deuteronomy 12:32
4. "Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar." Proverbs 30:5-6

G. Scripture is the Lord's command:

1. If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment. 1 Corinthians 14:37

H. Scripture is the standard through which Jesus will judge:

The words of Christ are only known today from scripture. Although traditionalists claim oral tradition, they cannot come up with even one thing Jesus said, that is not recorded in scripture that will judge us. Scripture is the all-sufficient standard for the "words of Jesus". Although we cannot be certain that the phrase, "books were opened" in Rev 20:12, refers to 66 books of scripture, we are certain that no oral tradition is part of Judgement. The passage clearly states that books, to the exclusion of oral tradition, is the standard of judgement. The Law of Liberty in Jas 2:12 is a direct reference to scripture.

1. "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. John 12:48
2. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from *the things which were written in the books*, according to their deeds. Revelation 20:12
3. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by *the law of liberty*. James 2:12

I. Scripture is how we are reminded of oral traditions, proving oral tradition is replace by scripture:

"This is now, beloved, the second letter **I am writing to you** in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the **words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.**" 2 Peter 3:1-2

1. Here we have a reference to oral traditions, "spoken beforehand".
2. Although traditionalists claim oral tradition, they cannot come up with even one phrase or the apostles Jesus said, that is not recorded in scripture!
3. Yet Peter uses scripture as the method of reminding Christians of this oral tradition.
4. Since there is no known "oral tradition" of the specific words spoken, it is obvious that scripture replaced oral tradition.

J. Scripture alone brings certainty in the midst of various oral traditions, proving oral tradition is unreliable: [Luke 1:1-4](#)

1. "Inasmuch as **many have undertaken to compile an account** of the things accomplished among us, just as they were **handed down to us** by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to **write it out for you in consecutive order**, most excellent Theophilus; so **that you may know the exact truth about the things** you have been taught." [Luke 1:1-4](#)
2. Luke begins by mentioning uninspired gospels by Christians, then the oral tradition of the apostles and concludes that scripture alone will allow Theophilus to **know for certain** what the truth is.



3. [Click for detailed outline](#) on Luke 1:1-4 to prove sola Scriptura!

● See also: [The apostolic fathers taught Sola Scriptura.](#)



www.bible.ca

Roman Catholic and Orthodox "oral tradition" defenders attack the Bible and we defeat them with the sword of the Spirit!

- [Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- [Pro-Tradition arguments refuted!](#)

by Steve Rudd

Sola Scriptura proof texts: 1 Corinthians 4:6



"Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so **that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written**, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other." 1 Corinthians 4:6

1 Cor 4:6 is an irrefutable blow to oral traditionalists:

"upon this rock I will build My church" (Mt 16:18)

"do not say 'I am of Peter'" (1 Cor 1:10)

"as gardeners and builders... each man must be careful how he builds on it." (1 Cor 3:10)

"I used the gardener and builder figures to that you learn not to exceed what is written" (1 Cor 4:6)

Jesus intended his church to built upon scripture, not Peter or oral traditions.



Sola Scriptura proven
from the Bible!

- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)
- [More Anti-Sola Scriptura proof texts!](#)

Introduction:

1. The larger context of 1 Cor 4:6 is in a section of 1 Corinthians we call, "preacheritus" (Chapters 1-4.) The church was beginning to follow men rather than scripture. Of course Roman Catholics today say, "I am of Peter" ... the pope. This directly violates what Paul said here.
2. These four chapters are a contextual unit. We connect Mt 16:18 + 1 Cor 1:10-13 + 1 Cor 3:5-17 + 1 Cor 4:6.
3. "upon this rock I will build My church" Mt 16:18 + "as gardeners and builders... each man must be careful how he builds on it." (1 Cor 3:10) "I used the gardener and builder figures to that you learn not to exceed what is written" (1 Cor 4:6)
4. Paul did not say, "The things are to teach you not to exceed my oral teachings." Instead the emphasis is on showing the supremacy of scripture over oral tradition.
5. What makes this even more powerful, is the fact that in 54 AD, only a few of the New Testament books were written, yet the church was still warned to abide within the scripture she had.

6. In the time of transition (50 - 96 AD) between 100% oral (30- 50 AD) and 100% written (96 AD - present), we find the highest standard is written. This is most troubling to traditionalists in their myth making claims the church did not have the Bible until the 4th century.

A. Context: of connected passages: Matthew 16:18 + 1 Cor 1:10-13 + 1 Cor 3:5-17 + 1 Cor 4:6.

1. "I also say to you that you are Peter, and **upon this rock I will build My church**; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." Matthew 16:18
2. "Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you**, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's *people*, that there are quarrels among you. Now I mean this, that **each one of you is saying**, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "**I of Peter**," and "I of Christ." Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" 1 Corinthians 1:10-13
3. "**What then is Apollos? And what is Paul?** Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one. **I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth**. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, **like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it**. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is *to be* revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? **If any man destroys the temple of God**, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are." 1 Corinthians 3:5-17
4. "**Now these things**, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may **learn not to exceed what is written**, so that no one of you will become **arrogant in behalf of one against the other**." 1 Corinthians 4:6

B. The "Gardener" and "Builder" figures applied to Paul and Apollos:

I have figuratively applied to myself and

Apollo (4:6)

Figure #1: Gardener: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth." (3:6)

Figure #2: Builder: "like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it" (3:10)

1. There are two figures: The figure mentioned in 4:6 directly refers to the "planting, watering" of 3:6 and the "master builder" figure of 3:10.
2. Notice the figure is designed to impress the reader not to exceed what is written.
3. In 3:6 it is speaking about making the church grow. Remember Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church" Matthew 16:18.
4. In other words, in being God's workman, in finding new members, making the local church prosper, church government, doctrine and the like, we must not exceed what is written!

C. The five passages:

"upon this rock I will build My church" (Mt 16:18)



"do not say 'I am of Peter'" (1 Cor 1:10)



"as gardeners and builders... each man must be careful how he builds on it." (1 Cor 3:10)



"I used the gardener and builder figures to that you learn not to exceed what is written" (1 Cor 4:6)



Jesus intended his church to built upon scripture, not Peter or oral traditions.

Conclusion:

1. 1 Cor 4:6 so clearly refutes the Roman Catholic and Orthodox church's doctrine of oral tradition, they do not know what to do with it!
2. Jesus said, "upon this rock I will build My church" and Paul warned: "in building the church, do not exceed scripture!"

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

27 Book Bible Canon

Sola Scriptura

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

ProofTexts

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura and the Apostolic Fathers!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

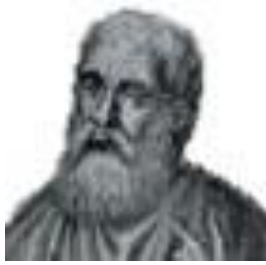
Introduction:



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)
(You must take our catechism class before you read the truths below.)

1. When a Roman Catholic and Orthodox reads the quotes we have compiled, he will be quite surprised. They will see that the Fathers talked about the scriptures in a way that is different from their own church leaders.
2. It is clear that the "Apostolic Fathers" always maintained a concept of "apostolic tradition" in distinction from the scripture. But what is even clearer, is that this "apostolic tradition" was considered an exact echo of scripture and did not include important doctrines that scripture was silent about.
3. The Apostolic Fathers viewed oral tradition between 30 - 100 AD as a duplicate of scripture. They also stated that scripture replaced oral tradition. In other words, there was nothing in oral tradition that was lacking in scripture.
4. All the early creeds were based directly upon scripture on a clause by clause basis. This is a crushing blow to Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders, because if ever there was a place that "oral traditions" not found in scripture should have arisen, creeds were the perfect place. Yet we see these creeds were based on scripture. It has also not dawned upon these tradition defenders that creeds are not oral traditions, but written traditions.
5. When the Apostolic Fathers spoke of traditions that were not found in scripture, they were minor local customs that were practiced, like drinking milk and honey after baptism and not taking a bath the week after baptism. Of course neither the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches do these things today, proving our point, that these were optional customs. Most important, is that these are the only kinds of "oral traditions" that were not found in the Bible that the Fathers spoke about.
6. The Apostolic Fathers firmly believed in the all-sufficiency of scripture. They believed that in scripture was revealed everything man needed in life and doctrine.
7. In rebuttal to sola Scriptura, Roman Catholic and Orthodox apologists, always point out that many of the "fathers" we quote, also believed in many false doctrines not found in scripture. They argue: "if they believed in using the Bible alone for doctrine, they did a rather poor job of it!" With this we agree. For example, although the final canon was not settled until after 200 AD, by 100 AD, the four gospels, Acts and the 14 letters of Paul were in full and universal circulation. Yet it is within these very letters that prove bishops and presbyters were interchangeable, being the same office. Further, the scriptures are clear that bishops must be married with children. This clear teaching, evidently did not stop the gradual apostasy of church organization that began in about 150 AD and came to full flower in 606 AD. Therefore, it is obvious, that the Fathers maintained the concept of using the Bible as the ultimate and all-sufficient source of doctrine and tradition, while failing to notice the very drifting away from the Bible pattern. Many religions today will say one thing and do another, but the key here is the official approach the "Fathers" voiced that scripture was the final authority.
8. Roman Catholic and Orthodox advocates deceptively mislead you into thinking that since the heretics also tried to prove their doctrines from the Bible, the church gave up on scriptural "proof texting" and won the battles by appealing to oral tradition and apostolic succession. This view completely misrepresents history and the facts. [Click here to learn why.](#)

A. Apostolic Fathers believed scripture alone was understandable.



To the horror of Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders, the apostolic fathers expected the heretics to correctly interpret scripture.

[The Apostolic Fathers expected all to interpret scripture and get it right!](#)

B. Master index of the Fathers on *Sola Scriptura*:

Apostolic Fathers: [Dates they lived and other information.](#)

180 AD: [Irenaeus](#)

180 AD: [Clement](#) of Alexandria

200 AD: [Tertullian](#)

200 AD: [Hippolytus](#)

250 AD: [Cyprian](#)

325 AD: [Athanasius](#)

350 AD: [Hilary](#) of Poitiers

360 AD: [Cyril](#) of Jerusalem

370 AD: [Basil](#)

375 AD: [Gregory](#) of Nyssa

400 AD: [Jerome](#)

405 AD: John [Chrysostom](#)

425 AD: [Augustine](#)

425 AD: John [Cassian](#)

450 AD: [Theodoret](#)

C. Apostolic Fathers: [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



The Apostolic Fathers recognized five different kinds of tradition:



[Tradition #1: Scripture.](#) (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)



[Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration.](#) (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)



[Tradition #3: Expedient tradition.](#) (Roman 14:5)



[Tradition #4: Uninspired creeds "Rule of Faith".](#) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)



[Tradition #5: False doctrine tradition.](#) (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5)



[Mistakes made by the Apostolic Fathers based upon tradition](#)

D. Catechism class for oral Traditionalists:



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)
(You must take our catechism class before you read our truths.)

Apostolic Fathers: Sola Scriptura Creedalists

1. "Ignorance of prophetic diction and unskillfulness in interpreting Scripture has led them into a perversion of the point and meaning of the passage." (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 1, 35)

Notice how Hilary expected the heretics to be able to understand the scriptures correctly! A Roman Catholic or Orthodox would never say this. Instead, they would say, "The reason the heretics are wrong, is the fact that it is impossible for them to understand the scriptures because only the church can correct interpret the Bible"! If Hilary were Roman Catholic, he would have said, "Its not because of your "ignorance and lack of skill" it's the fact that you are trying at all! Just ask me what the correct interpretation is!" Or even simpler, "Be silent heretic, and read the Nicene creed for yourself!"

2. "In order to solve as easily as possible this most difficult problem, **we must first master the knowledge which the Divine Scriptures** give of Father and of Son, that so we may speak with more precision, as dealing with familiar and accustomed matters." (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 3, 2)

Hilary again shows that the individual skill can make a difference in properly understanding the Bible whether you are in the church or a heretic! His solution to the Arian controversy was in the scripture, not the Nicene creed.

3. "Yet it is well for us to know all that has been revealed upon the subject, for though we are not responsible for the words of Scripture, **yet we shall have to render an account for the sense we have assigned to them.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 4, 19)

If the church is the infallible interpreter of Scripture as directed by the Holy Spirit, why would Hilary worry about the interpretation? Obviously then, each individual is responsible for the way they interpret scripture!

4. "And now, although **we have found the sense of Scripture, as we understand it, in harmony with the conclusions of ordinary reason**, the two agreeing that equality is incompatible either with diversity or with isolation, yet we must seek a fresh support for Our contention from actual words of our Lord. For only so can we check that licence of **arbitrary interpretation** whereby these bold traducers of the faith would **even venture to cavil [raise trivial objections] at the Lord's solemn self-revelation.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 7, 16)

Another powerful statement by Hilary that the scriptures are to be interpreted by the individual. Notice he does not say, "we are the church, we have the Holy Spirit to guide our interpretation", but "as we understand it". He also says that the natural reading of scripture is enough. Why do the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches think that what they write is understandable with "ordinary reason", but what God writes is confusing to all unless you are the Pope? If non-Catholics cannot understand the Bible apart from "God's organization", because the scripture is veiled to the common man, why would they expect the common man to understand their defense of doctrine? Yet Orthodox and Catholic defenders think they are better skilled at writing religious literature than God! For only in their writings can man understand truth!

5. "Such suggestions are **inconsistent with the clear sense of Scripture.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 4, 16)
"There is no room for deception; **the words of Scripture are clear**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 4, 32)

Hilary again states that the Bible is understandable! He dismisses the heretics, not because they can't understand the Bible, but because their doctrines are contrary to the "clear sense of Scripture". The Bible is clear! Its easy to understand! Hilary wonders why the Arians cannot see it? The Orthodox and Roman Catholics teach that the Bible is a veiled document that only becomes clear to the leaders.

6. "Let this, then, **Christ-loving man**, be our offering to you, just for a rudimentary sketch and outline, in a short compass, of the faith of Christ and of His Divine appearing to usward. But you, taking occasion by this, if you **light upon the text of the Scriptures, by genuinely applying your mind to them, will learn from them more completely and clearly the exact detail of what we have said.** For they were spoken and written by God, through men who spoke of God. **But we impart of what we have learned from inspired teachers who have been conversant with them**, who have also become martyrs for the deity of Christ, to your zeal for learning, in turn. (Athanasius, On the Incarnation of the Word, 56)

Whereas the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches teach that only the church can correctly interpret the Bible, Athanasius really believed that scripture was understandable by the common man by simply reading it! Notice it is addressed to the "Christ-loving man", to all! This kind of statement from Athanasius, should be troubling for Catholics and Orthodox alike, since, **he is the a church leader** who is not supposed to ask us to use our own powers of interpretation to know truth, he is supposed to interpret it for us and just tell us his opinions!

Go To Truth

CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

Proof Texts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site

LINK to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

The Apostolic Fathers viewed scripture itself as tradition

"So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

Introduction:

It is clear that the apostolic fathers viewed scripture as tradition. They even referred to scripture as tradition. This should not surprise us, since scripture itself refers to itself as tradition: 2 Thess 2:15

Tradition #1: Scripture. (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)

A. The Bible texts that support scripture as tradition:

1. "So then, brethren, stand firm and **hold to the traditions** which you were taught, whether by word *of mouth* or **by letter from us.**" 2 Thessalonians 2:15. **Here scripture is directly called a tradition.**
2. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and **not according to the tradition** which you received from us." 2 Thessalonians 3:6. **This verse likely includes both oral and scripture tradition as a summary of 2 Thess 2:15.**
3. **All Scripture is inspired by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17
4. "I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely **zealous for my ancestral traditions.**" Galatians 1:14 (These traditions were started by Moses and written down in scripture as the law.)

B. The fathers speak of the inspired scriptures themselves as being apostolic tradition:

1. "**the Apostolic tradition teaches in the words of blessed Peter**, 'Forasmuch then as Christ suffered for us in the Flesh' Athanasius then quotes: 1 Peter 4:1; Titus 2:13; Heb 2:1, which is the apostolic tradition. Notice that the expression, "**words of blessed Peter**" might be seen as some oral tradition, but it just the plain Good old Bible Athanasius is referring to! (Athanasius, To Adelphius, Letter 60, 6)
2. Hilary equates, the "**faith from the beginning**" with "**if any man teaches contrary to the wholesome and right faith of the Scriptures**" and saw no difference. (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Councils, or the Faith of the Easterns, 30)

The Apostolic Fathers recognized five different kinds of tradition:



[Tradition #1: Scripture.](#) (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)



[Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration.](#) (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)



[Tradition #3: Expedient tradition.](#) (Roman 14:5)



[Tradition #4: Uninspired creeds "Rule of Faith".](#) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)



[Tradition #5: False doctrine tradition.](#) (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5)



[Mistakes made by the Apostolic Fathers based upon tradition](#)

By Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

- Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!
- Request FREE Bible study course by Mail
- Information about who we are!
- Assembly locations of Christians near you.
- Telephone hotlines in your own home town.
- Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura proof texts: Luke 1:1-4



"Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught." Luke 1:1-4

Luke 1:1-4 is an irrefutable blow to oral traditionalists:

"Luke begins by mentioning uninspired gospels by Christians, then the oral tradition of the apostles and concludes that scripture alone will allow Theophilus to know for certain what the truth is.



Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!

- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)
- [More Anti-Sola Scriptura proof texts!](#)

Introduction:

1. Luke 1:1-4 so clearly shows the superiority of scripture over oral tradition, that Roman Catholic and Orthodox tradition defenders have no idea what to do with it!
2. Luke begins by mentioning uninspired gospels by Christians, then the oral tradition of the apostles and concludes that scripture alone will allow Theophilus to know for certain what the truth is.
3. If oral tradition could bring about certainty, then Theophilus would not be puzzled about what the exact truth was.
4. Obviously there were many different oral traditions in addition to the words of the apostles. Theophilus was not able to determine for himself, which of these oral traditions were valid and which were not.
5. Only through scripture, could Theophilus know the exact truth for certain.

A. Closer look at the text: Luke 1:1-4

"Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught." Luke 1:1-4

Luke	Text	Inspired?	
1:1	"many have undertaken to compile an account of the things"	uninspired written gospels by Christians	Unreliable
1:2	"handed down to us"	Inspired oral tradition of apostles	Uncertain without scripture
1:3	"write <i>it</i> out for you in consecutive order"	Gospel of Luke: scripture	Reliable, certainty
1:4	"that you may know the exact truth"		

B. Luke 1:4 in five translations:

NASB: so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

KJV: That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

NIV: so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

RSV: that you may know the truth concerning the things of which you have been informed.

ASV: that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed.

C. Defining "exact truth" of 1:4 [greek: asphaleia]

● Vine defines the word, "exact truth" as meaning, "not liable to fall, steadfast, firm, hence denoting safety".

● Strong defines the word "asphaleia", "1. firmness, stability. 2 certainty, undoubted truth. 3 security from enemies and dangers, safety."

1. Therefore, only through scripture, to the exclusion of both oral apostolic tradition and the many uninspired gospels written by Christians, can we know the truth.
2. Although oral tradition is just as inspired as Scripture alone brings

Conclusion:

1. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches are in grave danger of error by insisting that oral apostolic tradition is as reliable as scripture.
2. Scripture alone brings certainty!



Written scripture



Inspired



Reliable



Brings certainty



**Inspired oral
apostolic tradition**



Inspired



Unreliable



No certainty



**Uninspired gospels
by Christians**



Uninspired



Unreliable



No certainty



- Inspired
- reliable
- certain



- Inspired
- unreliable
- uncertain



- uninspired
- unreliable
- uncertain



by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Anti-Sola Scriptura Arguments Refuted:



"2 Timothy 3:16-17 doesn't say the Bible is all sufficient by itself."

False arguments that Catholics and Orthodox use to trash Sola Scriptura are refuted.

Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!



- [More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- A list of [Sola Scriptura proof texts](#).
- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)



"2 Timothy 3:16-17 doesn't say the Bible is all sufficient by itself."

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

"What Paul does not say [2 Timothy 3:16], however, is that the Scriptures are sufficient all by themselves." (THE WAY: What Every Protestant Should Know About the Orthodox Church, Clark Carlton, 1997, p 122)



Refutation of the false Roman Catholic and Orthodox argument:

"2 Timothy 3:16-17 doesn't say the Bible is all sufficient by itself."

Sola Scriptura is proven by 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

1. 2 Tim 3:17 says that the scripture will "equip us for every good work". It does not say that scripture will "equip us for MOST good works". It does not say that scripture will "equip us PARTIALLY for good works".
2. The KJV uses the imagery that scripture is able to "fully furnish" us for ever good work. Now imagine you rented an apartment and the ad said it was "fully furnished". When you move in you know what fully furnished means. It has a bed, a couch, a fridge etc. Everything you need to live. If you walked in and it had not dresser drawers to put your clothes in, you would complain that it was not fully furnished! The scripture is able to fully furnish us for EVERY GOOD WORK. In other words, there are no good works that the Bible does not discuss. If we abide with scripture, and scripture alone, we need not look to oral church traditions to learn about any other good works. If we do what the Bible says, God will be happy with us.
3. The ability to read is all you need to refute the false claim made by Clark Carlton. "every good word" means what we all know it to mean.

Refuted



[More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)

Refuted



[More Pro-Oral Church tradition arguments refuted!](#)

by Steve Rudd



← Truth

False Doctrines

(that first century Christians never believed)



Contact us

Ask a Bible Question
Request Bible study,
Comments, Suggestions

Who are we ?

Find a church near you



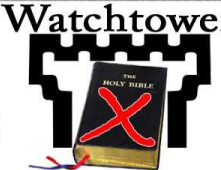
Roman Catholic Examined



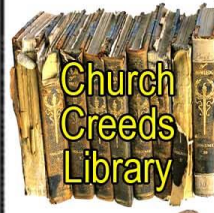
Sabbath Keepers Refuted



Mormon Nephi Plates Exposed



Watchtower Apostate Alert



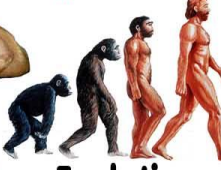
Church Creeds Library



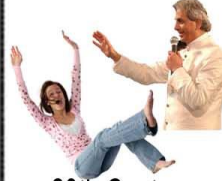
Myths of Islam



Psychiatry That Fixed It!



Evolution



20th Century Tongues



Rapture, Tribulation and Premillennialism



Calvinism Refuted



Annihilation & Extinction Refuted

SEARCH this local site

LINK to this site

Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA

Anti-Sola Scriptura Arguments Refuted:



"How could 2 Timothy 3:16 teach the all-sufficiency of scripture, when several New Testament books were not even written yet?"

False arguments that Catholics and Orthodox use to trash Sola Scriptura are refuted.

Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!



- [More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- A list of [Sola Scriptura proof texts](#).
- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)



"How could 2 Timothy 3:16 teach the all-sufficiency of scripture, when several New Testament books were not even written yet?"

"No Orthodox Christian would deny that Paul's affirmation of the inspiration of the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16) applies to the New Testament by extension. However, at the time Paul wrote to Timothy-and for almost three centuries thereafter-there was no official New Testament canon. Indeed, at that point, not all of the books of the New Testament had even been written. If Paul were asserting the sole sufficiency of the Scriptures (i.e. the Old Testament), it would obviate the need for the New Testament." (THE WAY: What Every Protestant Should Know About the Orthodox Church, Clark Carlton, 1997, p 122)



Refutation of the false Roman Catholic and Orthodox argument:

"How could 2 Timothy 3:16 teach the all-sufficiency of scripture, when several New Testament books were not even written yet?"

Bible texts taught Sola Scriptura and the all-sufficiency of scripture, even when the canon was still incomplete!

1. According to this Roman Catholic and Orthodox argument, the only way God could state by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that scripture is all-sufficient, is if it was the very last verse of the very last book written in the Bible. So if God had inserted "2 Timothy 3:16-17" after Revelation 22:21, then the traditionalists would admit they are wrong and proclaim the Bible indeed does teach the all-sufficiency of scripture.
2. But the fact remains that 2 Timothy 3:16-17 does clearly state the all-sufficiency of scripture. This argument is clearly an attempt to create a false dilemma, and deny what the text obviously says.
3. Obviously God knew exactly how many books were going to be in the Canon of the New Testament. He knew who would write the books and when. God also knew the exact working that would be in these books, since he, not the men chose the working, as 2 Peter 1:20-21 says.


 [Refuted](#)
[More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)

 [Refuted](#)
[More Pro-Oral Church tradition arguments refuted!](#)


by Steve Rudd

False Doctrines

(that first century Christians never believed)




← Truth



Contact us

Ask a Bible Question
Request Bible study,
Comments, Suggestions




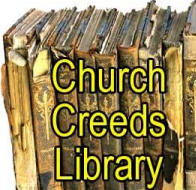





Who are we ?



Find



a church near you

 Roman Catholic Examined	 Sabbath Keepers Refuted	 Mormon Nephi Plates Exposed	 Jehovah's Witness Apostate Alert
 Church Creeds Library	 Myths of Islam	 Psychiatry That Fixed It!	 Evolution
 20th Century Tongues	 THE COMING FOUR BLOOD MOONS REFUTED JOHN HAGEE	 TULIP	 Neo-Sadduceeism No Spirit, Hell Annihilation & Extinction Refuted

SEARCH this local site
LINK to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The failure of extra-biblical oral church traditions

Tradition is only valid, when it mirrors scripture, not adds to it or changes it!



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

A. Our position on scripture and tradition: "The Bible is the mother of Tradition"

Our view is that the scriptures themselves are the all-sufficient and infallible "Rule of Faith" (regula fidei) for every day living, doctrine and liturgy. Tertullian and Jerome started dangerous practices in writing their "Rule of Faith", because these creeds eventually supplanted the authority of the Bible itself. 100% of the information we need for salvation is found in scripture. This means that doctrines and liturgy not taught in scripture are superfluous to the will of God, and range from optional at best to condemned. All traditions are derived from and measured against scripture.

Truth: "The Bible is the mother of Tradition"

False: "Tradition is the mother of the Bible."



[Top ten list of why the Roman Catholic and Orthodox take the wrong view of tradition](#)

B. The Catholic and Orthodox view of tradition: "Tradition is the mother of the Bible."
(priest)

When Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders attach sola Scriptura, they appeal to references to tradition in both scripture and the writings of the Church Fathers. They use these references to justify the introduction of extra-biblical doctrines which they say should not be rejected because they were taught orally by the apostles themselves. Every time they see the word "tradition" they think it destroys the truth of sola Scriptura. There are a number of serious problems with this view. Scripture is also called tradition in the Bible and by the Church Fathers. Even the "Rule of Faith" Creeds were all based directly on scripture phrase by phrase, and never "oral tradition". Finally, there were liturgical traditions that the Church Fathers said were not found in scripture, but oral tradition alone. Amazingly, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches practice almost none of this liturgy today, proving false their claim that their current liturgy came from the apostles.

Today however, the Roman Catholic church, for example rejects both scripture and tradition (as recorded in the apostolic fathers) and claims that truth is determined only by the current practice of the living Pope. When scripture contradicts Catholic teaching and liturgy, they claim we misinterpret scripture. When the tradition of the Church Fathers contradicts Catholic teaching and liturgy, they claim we misinterpret history. Like Jehovah's Witnesses, Catholics believe that the current church organization is inspired and guided by God into truth. Before reading the quote below, make sure you are sitting down with your seat belt on!

"But the **appeal to antiquity is both a treason and a heresy**. It is a treason because it rejects the **Divine voice of the Church at this hour**, and a heresy because it denies that voice to be Divine. How can we know what antiquity was except through the Church? ... I may say in strict truth that **the Church has no antiquity**. It rests upon its own supernatural and perpetual consciousness. ... **The only Divine evidence to us of what was primitive is the witness and voice of the Church at**

this hour." (Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost: Or Reason and Revelation, 1865, p 227-228)

C. Jesus condemned the error of using tradition: Catholic/Orthodox are guilty!

"The entire Roman Catholic argument depends upon the assumption that Rome could not do what Israel did. The problem is that in reality she has done exactly what Israel did. She has placed herself in precisely the same position that the Scribes and Pharisees found themselves in. Their oral law or tradition was so "synthesized" to the written Torah, that judgment of the validity of that unwritten law by means of the written law became an impossibility. Neither could judge the other because both were assumed to have originated with Moses. In the same way Rome has developed an unwritten tradition that she has synthesized with the written New Testament to the degree that it cannot be judged by that New Testament. If Mark 7 teaches us anything, it is that the two must not be "synthesized." The written Word of God must remain the unique norm." (The Shape Of Sola Scriptura, Keith A. Mathison, Reformed Protestant, 2001, p 179)



[Doctrinal development is condemned!](#)

The Apostolic Fathers recognized five different kinds of tradition:



[Tradition #1: Scripture.](#) (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)



[Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration.](#) (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)



[Tradition #3: Expedient tradition.](#) (Roman 14:5)



[Tradition #4: Uninspired creeds "Rule of Faith".](#) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)



[Tradition #5: False doctrine tradition.](#) (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5)



[Mistakes made by the Apostolic Fathers based upon tradition](#)

Oral tradition is inherently unreliable over time

We challenge traditionalists to give us one example of one apostolic oral tradition that is still practiced in the church today. Remember, you cannot quote the writings of the apostolic fathers, because that is not oral but written! Since you believe the ecumenical councils were inspired, that doesn't count either. Why should they since they are clearly post-apostolic legislation. Had the apostles taught what the councils said, then they wouldn't have needed the canons!



Roman Catholic and Orthodox "oral tradition" defenders attack the Bible and we defeat them with the sword of the Spirit!

- [Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)

Extra-Biblical Oral Tradition Arguments Refuted:

Typical Arguments that Catholics & Orthodox use to defend oral tradition are refuted.



"Paul commanded oral tradition to be followed in 2 Thessalonians 2:15"

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"John 20:30 clearly tells us that the Bible lacks many things Jesus did."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"Paul got the names 'Jannes and Jambres' in 2 Timothy 3:8-9, from oral tradition."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"In 2 John 12, John refused to write everything in scripture, but gave them oral traditions."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"2 Timothy 2:2 proves apostolic succession and oral tradition."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"The saying of Jesus in Acts 20:35 came from oral tradition."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"The story of Michael and the Devil over Moses in Jude 9, comes from oral tradition."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"The prophecy in Matthew 2:23, that Jesus would be called a Nazarene, comes from oral tradition only, not scripture."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Moses' Seat is the antitype of the Papal authority. Matthew 23:2"

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Paul quoted an early hymn from tradition in Ephesians 5:14, 'Awake O sleeper'"

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Jews being sawn in two in Hebrews 11:37 came from tradition not scripture."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"We only know the identity of John as the writer of the fourth gospel from tradition"

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"The rock of the wilderness that followed them was recorded only in Jewish tradition, not scripture. 1 Corinthians 10:4."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Only oral tradition knew that all the prophets were persecuted in Acts 7:52."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Only oral tradition gave the duration of Elijah's drought in James 5:17 as 3 1/2 years."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Sola Scriptura is impossible since only 10% of people could read in 100 AD"

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"Sola Scriptura is impossible because there were so few Bibles in circulation until the printing press was invented in the 16th century."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"Widespread malnutrition of the first three centuries crippled the thinking ability of the average Christian to engage in Bible study."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



See Also: [Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)

Refuted



by Steve Rudd



Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura proof texts: A Bible Doctrine!

"When men throw out traditions and creeds and start to use the Bible only, they begin a journey where they know the vehicle in which they ride, but know not the route truth leads. Scripture alone lights the one pathway in the darkness, and although we may only see a short distance ahead, even surprised at times by the route, we know the final destination is paradise. Let the Holy Spirit guide you with scripture to your heavenly home!" (Steve Rudd)

- [Worship with a church that uses the Bible only in your own home town!](#)



Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!

- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)
- [Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- [Pro-Tradition arguments refuted!](#)

Introduction:

A. Sola Scriptura is taught in scripture:

1. We invite all those who rely on the organization to interpret the Bible for them including Orthodox, Catholics, and their [twin organization, the Jehovah's Witnesses](#), to think for themselves. If you have the intelligence to read the newspaper, why not the Bible?
2. We are in a difficult position with Catholics, Orthodox and Watchtower believers alike, because when we point out the verses that prove sola Scriptura is taught in scripture, they don't believe they can understand the Bible without their church interpreting it for them... and they say sola Scriptura is not taught in the Bible. What an amazing system of circular deception the Catholic, Orthodox and Brooklyn New York, churches have invented.
3. Sola Scriptura means that you use the Bible alone for doctrine. This means Catholics and Orthodox need not appeal to their contradictory oral church traditions and Jehovah's Witnesses need not rely upon the [Watchtower magazine to interpret](#) the Bible for them.

B. Catholics and Orthodox claim Sola Scriptura not taught in the Bible itself and is unscriptural.

"the doctrine of sola Scriptura is not scriptural." ... "The idea of sola Scriptura was an invention of the sixteenth century." (THE WAY: What Every Protestant Should Know About the Orthodox Church, Clark Carlton, 1997, p 117, p 91)

1. On this page, is all the proof you need to know that both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches are wrong, because you will see for yourself, that Sola Scriptura is a Bible doctrine.
2. See also: [The apostolic fathers taught Sola Scriptura](#).



Sola Scriptura Power texts

Quick Reference

www.Bible.ca



1 Cor 4:6: [Click for detailed outline](#). Jesus said, "upon this rock I will build My church" and Paul warned: "in building the church, **do not exceed scripture!**"



Luke 1:1-4: [Click for detailed outline](#). Luke begins by mentioning uninspired gospels by Christians, then the oral tradition of the apostles and concludes that scripture alone will allow Theophilus to **know for certain** what the truth is.



Matthew 4:1-11. Three times Jesus was tempted by the Devil and each time Jesus replied exactly the same **three dangerous words** that defeated the Devil: "**IT IS WRITTEN**" Read it for yourself! If any one could have used oral tradition, it was Jesus, yet he chose the only safe and sure way to defeat Satan: Scripture. We just wish that the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches held scripture alone in the same high regard!

2 Timothy 3:16-17: No matter how traditionalists twist it, it still says that scripture alone is all-sufficient to **equip us for EVERY good work**.



"2 Timothy 3:16-17 doesn't say the Bible is all sufficient by itself."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)

"How could 2 Timothy 3:16 teach the all-sufficiency of scripture, when several New Testament books were not even written yet?"

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



Luke 10:26: "What is written in the Law? **How does it read to you?**" Jesus expected even his enemies to correctly interpret the Bible by simply reading and studying it. Unlike Jesus, Catholics and Orthodox don't ask you what **you** think scripture says, they just tell you how their church interprets it and you have no choice but to accept what they tell you.



Acts 17:11-12: Even though the apostles were inspired with genuine oral revelation, they always directed people to the scriptures for the final determination of truth. Oral tradition is worthless without the witness of scripture! Unlike the apostles, Catholics and Orthodox would never send you to scripture, since they don't think you can even understand it!

I. The example of Jesus: Quoted scripture, never tradition:

A. Jesus defeated the three temptations of the Devil with, "it is written", not "I say". Mt 4:1-11

1. **The Temptation of Jesus:** Matthew 4:1-11. Three times Jesus was tempted by the Devil and each time Jesus replied exactly the same **three dangerous words** that defeated the Devil: "**IT IS WRITTEN**" Read it for yourself! If any one could have used oral tradition, it was Jesus, yet he chose the only safe and sure way to defeat Satan: Scripture. We just

with that the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches held scripture alone in the same high regard!

2. Traditionalists have simply not comprehended just how devastating it is that Jesus never appealed to his own authority in his 40 days temptation in the wilderness with the Devil.
3. Three times Jesus was tempted, three times Jesus replied, "It is written".
4. If oral tradition, or the authority of the church was valid, then Jesus would have at least one time referred to oral tradition, or used himself as the authority, as the Catholics, Orthodox and JW's use the church organization as an authority.

B. Never did Jesus refer to oral tradition to prove or defend truth.

1. Never does Jesus refer to oral traditions in a positive way.
2. Every time he defends truth he refers to the scriptures.
3. The only times Jesus referred to Oral traditions, was condemning them: 'But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.' "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men." He was also saying to them, "You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. "For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother, is to be put to death'; but you say, 'If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is to say, given to God),' you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that." (Mark 7:7-13)

C. Jesus made over 100 references to scripture. Jesus never relies upon oral traditions but scripture alone. Let's follow the Lord's pattern of relying upon scripture!

1. "Have you not read" Matthew 12:3
2. "have you not read in the Law" Matthew 12:5
3. "Did you never read in the Scriptures" Matthew 21:42

D. Jesus expected the scriptures to be understood by the average man, even his enemies:

1. "What is written in the Law? **How does it read to you?**" (Luke 10:26)
2. Jesus said to them, "Is this not the reason **you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures** or the power of God? (Mark 12:24)
3. But Jesus answered and said to them, "**You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures** nor the power of God. (Matthew 22:29)
4. "The Son of Man is to go, **just as it is written of Him**" There were any oral traditions as to who the messiah was. All were wrong! Some thought he was merely a king, some merely a prophet, some merely a priest! (Matthew 26:24)
5. "**What then is this that is written:** 'The stone which the builders rejected, This became the chief corner stone'? (Luke 20:17)
6. "You **search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life;** it is these that testify about Me (John 5:39)

7. "How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?" (Matthew 26:54)

II. The example of the apostles using Sola Scriptura:

A. Even though the apostles were inspired with genuine oral revelation, they always directed people to the scriptures for the final determination of truth. Oral tradition is worthless without the witness of scripture!

1. And according to Paul's custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures (Acts 17:2)
2. Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see* whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men. (Acts 17:11-12)
3. "Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ." (Acts 18:28)


B. Scriptures were read in the churches every Lord's Day:

1. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. (1 Timothy 4:13)

III. Powerful Sola Scriptura proof texts:

A. Abide only within scripture to the exclusion of oral tradition: 1 Corinthians 4:6

1. Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so **that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written**, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other. 1 Corinthians 4:6
2. Jesus said, "upon this rock I will build My church" and Paul warned: "in building the church, do not exceed scripture!"

3.  [Click for detailed outline](#) on 1 Cor 4:6 to prove sola Scriptura!

B. Scripture is understandable, even by young children:

1. "**from childhood you have known the sacred writings** which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:15
2. "if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, **when you read you can understand** my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; Ephesians 3:2-5

3. "For we write nothing else to you than **what you read and understand**, and I hope you will understand until the end" 2 Corinthians 1:13

C. Scripture alone is all-sufficient for life, morality, conduct and doctrine:

1. "All Scripture is inspired by God and **profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness**; so that the man of God may be adequate, **equipped for every good work**." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#) "2 Timothy 3:16-17 doesn't say the Bible is all sufficient by itself."

Refuted



1. [CLICK HERE](#) "How could 2 Timothy 3:16 teach the all-sufficiency of scripture, when several New Testament books were not even written yet?"
2. "I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, *I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself* in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth." 1 Timothy 3:14-15
3. "seeing that **His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness**, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust." 2 Peter 1:3-4
4. My little children, I am writing these things to you **so that you may not sin**. 1 John 2:1

D. The Gospel of John, by itself, is sufficient to bring about saving faith in Christ without oral traditions and the other three gospels! Actually, this may be true of each of the four gospels, although it is only stated by John:

1. Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written **so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**; and that believing you may have life in His name. (John 20:30-31)

E. Scripture alone is all-sufficient for complete hope, joy and assurance of salvation without any oral tradition:

1. For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have **hope**. (Romans 15:4)
2. These things we write, so that our **joy** may be made complete. 1 John 1:4
3. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have **eternal life**. 1 John 5:13

F. Scripture is the standard to which oral tradition may not be added:

Although Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders dismiss Rev 22:18 as applying only to the single book of revelation, these four texts prove it is a principle that applies to the whole Bible. Notice also that God knew that Revelation was the last book of the 66 book canon and that the warning not to add or take away from scripture **is at the very end of the very last book of the canon**. This simply cannot be coincidence but is God's eternal warning not to use oral traditions in addition to scripture! Although Revelation was not always placed in its current position at the end of the Bible, everyone always realized that it was the last book written.

1. "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book." Revelation 22:18-19
2. "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." Deuteronomy 4:2
3. "Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it." Deuteronomy 12:32
4. "Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Do not add to His words Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar." Proverbs 30:5-6

G. Scripture is the Lord's command:

1. If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment. 1 Corinthians 14:37

H. Scripture is the standard through which Jesus will judge:

The words of Christ are only known today from scripture. Although traditionalists claim oral tradition, they cannot come up with even one thing Jesus said, that is not recorded in scripture that will judge us. Scripture is the all-sufficient standard for the "words of Jesus". Although we cannot be certain that the phrase, "books were opened" in Rev 20:12, refers to 66 books of scripture, we are certain that no oral tradition is part of Judgement. The passage clearly states that books, to the exclusion of oral tradition, is the standard of judgement. The Law of Liberty in Jas 2:12 is a direct reference to scripture.


1. "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day. John 12:48
2. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and **books were opened**; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from **the things which were written in the books**, according to their deeds. Revelation 20:12
3. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by *the law of liberty*. James 2:12

I. Scripture is how we are reminded of oral traditions, proving oral tradition is replace by scripture:

"This is now, beloved, the second letter **I am writing to you** in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the **words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.**" 2 Peter 3:1-2

1. Here we have a reference to oral traditions, "spoken beforehand".
2. Although traditionalists claim oral tradition, they cannot come up with even one phrase or the apostles Jesus said, that is not recorded in scripture!
3. Yet Peter uses scripture as the method of reminding Christians of this oral tradition.
4. Since there is no known "oral tradition" of the specific words spoken, it is obvious that scripture replaced oral tradition.

J. Scripture alone brings certainty in the midst of various oral traditions, proving oral tradition is unreliable: [Luke 1:1-4](#)

1. "Inasmuch as **many have undertaken to compile an account** of the things accomplished among us, just as they were **handed down to us** by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to **write it out for you in consecutive order**, most excellent Theophilus; so **that you may know the exact truth about the things** you have been taught." [Luke 1:1-4](#)
2. Luke begins by mentioning uninspired gospels by Christians, then the oral tradition of the apostles and concludes that scripture alone will allow Theophilus to **know for certain** what the truth is.
3.  [Click for detailed outline](#) on Luke 1:1-4 to prove sola Scriptura!

● See also: [The apostolic fathers taught Sola Scriptura.](#)



www.bible.ca

Roman Catholic and Orthodox "oral tradition" defenders attack the Bible and we defeat them with the sword of the Spirit!

- [Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- [Pro-Tradition arguments refuted!](#)

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

27 Book Bible Canon

Sola Scriptura

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site
LINK to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Anti-Sola Scriptura Arguments Refuted:



"Sola Scriptura is an invention of 16th century Protestants."

False arguments that Catholics and Orthodox use to trash Sola Scriptura are refuted.

Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!



- [More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- A list of [Sola Scriptura proof texts.](#)
- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)



"Sola Scriptura is an invention of 16th century Protestants."

"The truth of the matter is ... that the doctrine of **sola Scriptura is not scriptural**. In other words, the claim that the Bible is the sole source of authority for Christian life and doctrine is not found in the Bible." (THE WAY: What Every Protestant Should Know About the Orthodox Church, Clark Carlton, 1997, p 117)

"The irony is that the principle by which the Reformers sought to return to the purity of the early Church was itself unknown to the early Church. **The idea of sola Scriptura was an invention of the sixteenth century**. No Father or council of the early Church ever asserted that the Scriptures, in and of themselves, with-out any reference to the Church, are the all-sufficient rule of faith. The Reformation principle of **sola Scriptura was an invention of the Reformation itself**. ... This means that from the Day of Pentecost to October 31, 1517-a span of approximately 1488 years-the kind of theology which Protestantism exalts as being "authentic" could not have existed. In other words, the early Church, to which the Reformers theoretically wanted to return, had a theology quite different from that of the Reformers." (THE WAY: What Every Protestant Should Know About the Orthodox Church, Clark Carlton, 1997, p 91)

"The Reformation did not do away with tradition; it merely substituted the traditions of sixteenth-century nominalists and humanists for the tradition of the Apostles and early Church Fathers." (THE WAY: What Every Protestant Should Know About the Orthodox Church, Clark Carlton, 1997, p 109)



Refutation of the false Roman Catholic and Orthodox argument:

"Sola Scriptura is an invention of 16th century Protestants."

Sola Scriptura was not invented by 16th century Protestants, but is taught in the Bible and practiced by the Apostolic Fathers.

1. [Click here: For a list of Bible verses that prove sola Scriptura is taught in the Bible.](#) On this page, is all the proof you need to know that both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches are wrong, because you will see for yourself, that Sola Scriptura is a Bible doctrine.
2. The idea that Sola Scriptura was "**an invention of the sixteenth century**" is proven wrong by the fact that the earliest [apostolic Fathers clearly taught Sola Scriptura](#). The Bible and Apostolic Fathers taught it. Then between 200 AD and 1500 AD, there was a gradual move towards the adoption of human creeds and traditions. By the time Luther came along, the Roman Catholic church had become so tradition bound, that the church barely resembled the one you can read about in the Bible. Luther simply restored the concept found in the Bible that scripture overthrows all traditions. For Catholic and Orthodox defenders to say sola Scriptura was invented in the 16th century, is as historically dishonest as it is wishful thinking.
3. We actually agree in part, that Luther and Calvin did replace Catholic traditions with some 16th century traditions. We highlight their approach to scripture, not what they specifically taught. Furthermore, both Luther and Calvin violated the concept of Biblical Sola Scriptura by creating their own set of authoritative man made creeds. They clearly did replace Catholic creeds, with their own set of creeds. This is where both the Catholic church and reformers went wrong. All creeds are as dangerous as they are unnecessary. After all, both Calvin and Luther accepted most of the early ecumenical councils and creeds. This was their big mistake. Luther and Calvin did not restore the church, they merely reformed it.
4. But we do applaud, Luther and Calvin for having the guts to stand up and say, "Current traditions are clearly wrong and contradict scripture."
5. For example, in 1809 AD, Thomas Campbell believed infant baptism was a Bible doctrine when he said, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent" (Declaration and Address, to the Christian Association of Washington, PA, 1809) When the reply came back, "Mr. Campbell, if we adopt that as a basis, then there is an end of infant baptism." Campbell agreed that even infant baptism would be thrown out if it was not Biblical. When Campbell made this statement, he had no idea that when he finally studied the scriptures on the validity of infant baptism, he would discover, to his surprise, that it was not a bible doctrine. So Campbell was committed to the principle, but did not know where it would lead him. Likewise Luther and Calvin knew that the Catholic system of oral tradition was wrong and were

committed to "sola Scriptura" not knowing at the time that later reformers would correctly define it.

6. Luther, Calvin and Campbell all made hermeneutic statements of sola Scriptura, that would later change their view of what is true.
7. That's what happens when men throw out traditions and creeds and start to use the Bible only, they begin a journey where they know the vehicle in which they ride, but know not where the vehicle will finally lead them. Luther never dreamed he would leave the Catholic church when he nailed his 95 articles on the door. Campbell never dreamed he would reject infant baptism when he said, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak"
8. **Catholics actually changed from their original sola Scriptura** to their current oral tradition: "When discrepancies between Catholic doctrine and Scripture became apparent, Catholic apologists stopped insisting that the doctrines of the Church could be deduced from Scripture and revived the theory of some early heretics, refuted by Irenaeus, that the Bible does not contain the whole of God's revelation and that a body of traditional doctrine existed in the Church equally deserving of veneration. [28] When it was pointed out that things were taught in the Roman Church for which the Bible furnished no adequate justification, Roman advocates insisted that though the Bible contained truth, it did not contain the whole truth, and that the Church was able by them to supplement the deficiencies of Scripture, having in those traditions a secure record of apostolic teaching on many points on which the Bible contained only obscure indications, or gave no information at all. [28-291]" (George Salmon, "[The Infallibility of the church](#), p 28)
9. [Click here: For a list of Bible verses that proof sola Scriptura is taught in the Bible.](#)

Refuted



[More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)

Refuted



[More Pro-Oral Church tradition arguments refuted!](#)

by Steve Rudd



← Truth

False Doctrines

(that first century Christians never believed)



Contact us

Ask a Bible Question
Request Bible study,
Comments, Suggestions

Who are we ?



Find

a church
near you



Roman Catholic
Examined



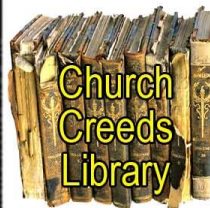
Sabbath Keepers
Refuted



Mormon Nephi
Plates Exposed



Watchtower
Jehovah's Witness
Apostate Alert



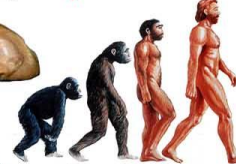
Church
Creeds
Library



Myths
of
Islam



Psychiatry
That Fixed It!



Evolution



20th Century
Tongues



Rapture, Tribulation
and Premillennialism



Calvinism Refuted



Neo-Sadduceeism
No Spirit, Hell
Annihilation &
Extinction Refuted

SEARCH this local site

LINK to this site

Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA

Anti-Sola Scriptura Arguments Refuted:



"David A. Barrett's book, World Christian Encyclopedia, says that there are 30,000 denominations that use sola Scriptura. Obviously using the Bible only doesn't work, we need tradition, since there is only one Catholic church!"

TRUTH: Any Traditionalist who misuses [David Barrett's data](#) in this way is either dishonest or ignorant. Barrett's data leads us to conclude that there are in fact 30 Roman Catholic denominations and 41 different Orthodox denominations and only 27 "Protestant" denominations

and 185 "Independent" denominations. Obviously then, using tradition is not the answer. Further, very few churches in the world actually use sola Scriptura!

Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!



- [More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- A list of [Sola Scriptura proof texts](#).
- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)



"There are 30,000 denominations that use sola Scriptura. Obviously using the Bible only doesn't work, we need tradition!"

"Sola Scriptura leads to **doctrinal anarchy**, which is further reason why you need an infallible authority. Look at all of these Protestant denominations, 30,000 of them the last time I checked. How do you know you're in the correct church?" (Staples/Latar debate on sola Scriptura, Apolonio Latar, Catholic defender, 2002)

"First, it **results in hermeneutical anarchy**. The fact that hundreds of denominations, each professing to derive its teaching **by means of the Holy Spirit's guidance from "Scripture alone,"** cannot agree even on the fundamentals of the faith, such as the meaning of baptism or the Lord's Supper or even the means of salvation, constitutes a powerful prima facie case against it. ... sola Scriptura has resulted in denominational factionalism. It has spawned thousands of denominations, and sects and cults and conventicles. According to the Oxford Encyclopedia of World Christianity, published in 1982, there are more than 28,000 recognizable denominations of Christianity. (Philip Blosser, Philosophical and Practical Problems with Sola Scriptura, 1998)

"The absurdity of this claim [sola Scriptura] is clearly evidenced by the multitude of conflicting interpretations that the thousands of Protestant denominations give to particular biblical passages." (THE WAY: What Every Protestant Should Know About the Orthodox Church, Clark Carlton, 1997, p 100)



Refutation of the false Roman Catholic and Orthodox argument:

"There are 30,000 denominations that use sola Scriptura. Obviously using the Bible only doesn't work, we need tradition!"

True Sola Scriptura leads to perfect unity! Oral traditions and creeds cause division!

A. Analysis of Table 1-5 to calculate the number of Roman Catholic and Orthodox denominations:

1. Barrett lists in [table 1-5](#), 25 Orthodox traditions inside the Orthodox church and 22 Roman Catholic traditions inside the Roman Catholic church. Add the 16 Orthodox traditions and 8 Roman Catholic traditions in the "Independent" category, and you of have a grand total of 41 different Orthodox denominations and 30 Roman Catholic denominations.
2. As you can see, religious division within Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches is about equal with others.
3. Whereas Traditionalists will claim they are "one" and Protestants are divided into many denominations, we can now see where they got that claim, and why it is so wrong!
4. As you will see, the 30,000 to 1 ratio spouted by traditionalists is way off. You will see, there are about as many different types of Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches as there are Protestant! They are equally divided!
5. We also note that the majority of the 209 "Independent" traditions are Pentecostal/Charismatic type churches who do not use sola Scriptura to determine doctrine. There are an additional 24 traditions of Roman Catholic and Orthodox within the "independent" category. This means that of the 209 Independent sects listed, 24 are from the traditions of Roman Catholic and Orthodox!
6. Final numbers: Barrett's data leads us to conclude that there are 30 Roman Catholic denominations and 41 different Orthodox denominations. This means that the worship, doctrine and liturgy has 30 Roman Catholic variations and 41 Orthodox variations, not to mention the fact that Catholic and Orthodox are divided against themselves. Obviously, oral tradition is not a reliable method of determining truth. Sola Scriptura is the only method that can work.

B. Assessments and comments:

1. Roman Catholic's and Orthodox should cast no stones at the religious division of Protestants, [since there are between 30-410 Roman Catholic denominations and between 41-1302 Orthodox denominations](#). (Depending how you count them: see conclusions.)
2. "Oral tradition leads to doctrinal anarchy, which is further reason why you need to use sola Scriptura. Look at all of these Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox denominations, no less than 71 of them the last time I checked. How do Catholics and Orthodox know you're in the correct church?" Which of the 71 "oral traditions" is the true one?

3. There are over 142 different Roman Catholic and Orthodox denominations. This fact will come as a shock to most Catholics and Orthodox believers. We suggest you write your leaders and tell them to stop using the "division" argument against sola Scriptura because it comes back and bites you!
4. This is a case of blind hypocrisy because not only are the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches bitterly divided against themselves, there are also more than 30 different Catholic denominations and [41 Orthodox denominations](#). Both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches made the identical claim that they have the true apostolic church tradition yet they differ so much in doctrine and liturgy, that they are not even "in fellowship" with each other. Obviously then, using tradition creates just as many different doctrines as Protestant churches.
5. Roman Catholic and Orthodox tradition defenders are merely highlighting the [failure of creedalism](#), not true sola Scriptura. The reasons these "Sola Scriptura churches" differ in doctrine, is because they truly are not using the Bible alone, but use creeds like traditionalists.
6. Many churches that claim to use the Bible alone, in fact do not. So the Roman Catholic and Orthodox observation that "sola Scriptura churches" differ in doctrine is invalid because they are not really "sola Scriptura" churches since they use creeds, councils and statements of faith in addition to the Bible to determine doctrine. We call them [pseudo-Sola Scriptura churches](#).
7. "Pseudo-Sola Scriptura" churches that claim such "personal illumination" differ as greatly in their doctrine, as the "Anti-Sola Scriptura" do in regards to their tradition. So Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders need find another line of reasoning that makes no reference to "guidance from the Holy Spirit to understand the Bible alone". We reject this as a false doctrine, as much as papal infallibility.
8. So **anti-sola Scriptura** churches like Roman Catholic and Orthodox differ with each other for exactly the same reason **pseudo-Sola Scriptura** churches: They both use human creeds as standards of doctrine.
9. Further, these Protestants are protesting the Catholic and Orthodox system. Obviously God did not see fit to give Rome or Constantinople any supremacy, otherwise they would not be protested so much. The fact that there is protest on this kind of universal protest on such a large scale proves something is very wrong. This failure is highlighted by the fact that the Orthodox church rejected the Roman church's claim for world domination. The East (Orthodox) basically told the bishop of Rome, "It has never been this way, why should we start now!"
10. Amazing Catholics claim they are the true church and Orthodox is the denomination, and the Orthodox say that they are the true church and the Roman Catholic is the denomination, yet both claim apostolic succession and oral tradition. Both are wrong, only through scripture can you have unity!
11. The following table is taken from David B. Barrett's World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World, 2001, p 14-15.

C. Table 1-3 Organized Christianity: Global totals in 1995 AD

Note: Denomination is defined in Barrett's book, as an organization within a single country. This means that if the Roman Catholic church is in 234 countries, it would have at least 234 denominations listed. Conversely, To say the Roman Catholic church has 239 denominations in

234 countries, is a conclusion that seriously misreads the data. On the other hand, the fact that there are 8848 denominations in the Protestant column, does not mean there are 8848 Protestant denominations as Catholics suggest. If you divide 8848 by the 237 countries, you come up with a figure of only actual 37 denominations in 237 countries. This calculation ($8848/237 = 37$) is close the real figure because table 1-5, lists 27 distinct Protestant traditions. We have taken the liberty of adding a new "sects" column below which is a more accurate picture of actual denominations.

Table 1-3			
Mega-bloc	Denominations in 1995	countries	Sects (table 1-5)
Roman Catholic	239	234	22
Orthodox	764	133	25
Protestant	8848	231	27
Anglicans	168	162	7
Independent	21,582	220	209
Marginal	1,488	215	15
Total	33,089	237	305

(David A. Barrett, World Christian Encyclopedia, 2001, p 12)

22 Roman Catholic sects within Roman Catholicism under Rome's direct control:	25 Orthodox sects within Orthodoxy direct communion with Constantinople:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Armenian (Eastern-rite Catholic) 2. Bulgarian (Byzantine rite) 3. Byzantine-rite (jurisdiction for more than one ethnic group) 4. Chaldean (Eastern Syrian rite) 5. Coptic (Alexandrian rite) 6. Ethiopic, Alexandrian rite) 7. Greek (Byzantine rite) 8. Hungarian (Byzantine rite) 9. Italo-Albanian (Byzantine rite) 10. Jurisdiction for both Latin-rite and Eastern-rite Catholics 11. Latin-rite Catholic 12. Malankara (Syro-Antiochian Eastern Syrian), Syro-Malankarese 13. Maronite (Syro-Antiochian, Western Syrian) 14. Melkite (Byzantine, Greek Catholic; Arabic-speaking) 15. Oriental (Jurisdiction for several Eastern rites) 16. Ian Byzantine rite 17. Russian (Byzantine rite) 18. Ruthenian (Byzantine rite) 19. Slovak (Byzantine rite) 20. Syro-Malabarese (Eastern Syrian) 21. Syrian, Syriac-speaking (Syro-Antiochian West Syrian) 22. Ukrainian Byzantine rite 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Albanian / Greek-speaking (Orthodox) 2. Arabic or Arabic / Greek-speaking Orthodox 3. Armenian Orthodox (Gregorian) 4. Bulgarian Orthodox 5. Byelorussian / Belorussian (White Russian / White Ruthenian) 6. Coptic Orthodox 7. Czech / Slavonic-speaking Orthodox 8. Estonian Orthodox 9. Ethiopic, Ethiopian Orthodox, GoOez-speaking 10. Finnish / Slavonic-Speaking Orthodox 11. Georgian Orthodox 12. Greek Orthodox 13. Hungarian / Slavonic-speaking Orthodox 14. Latvian Orthodox 15. Macedonian Orthodox 16. Moldavian Orthodox 17. Assyrian or Nestoran (East Syrian, Messihaye (Christians)) 18. Polish/Slavonic-speaking Orthodox 19. Romanian Orthodox 20. Russian Orthodox 21. Serbian Orthodox 22. Slovak Orthodox 23. Syro-Malabarese (Eastern-Syrian), Syriac/Malayalam-speaking 24. Syrian, Syriac-speaking Orthodox or Syro-Antiochian 25. Ukrainian Orthodox

(Table 1-5: David A. Barrett, World Christian Encyclopedia, 2001, p 16-18)

D. 24 Independent subgroups: 8 Roman Catholic and 16 Orthodox subgroups not in communion with their larger bodies from which they had their origin.

1. The total "denominations count" in column 11 of Table 1-5 for Roman Catholic is 172 and Orthodox 538 churches within the "Independent" for a total of 710 "denominations" in column 11.
2. Remember, however, that Barrett counts a single unified sect in three different countries as a count of 3 denominations in column 11.
3. So we have added column A, "Estimated actual # of denominations" which takes into account Barrett's reckoning system.
4. In our column A, we estimate that there are 140 denominations. This was calculated using rough averages but is likely reasonably accurate. Note that we also took the middle of high and low figures, meaning that we took the conservative road with the data.

2 Name RC = Catholic OR = Orthodox	3 Congregations 1995	6 Affiliated 1995	11 Denominations 2000	13 countries	A Estimated actual # of denominations
Independent Anglo-Catholic RC	100	14,000	3	2	2
Independent Byzantine-rite RC	30	6,000	1	1	1
Conservative Catholic (schism ex Rome) RC	3,000	4,518,000	435	30	30
Latin-rite Catholic RC	18,300	5,828,000	5	1	5
Liberal Catholic (Theosophical, Masonic, Gnostic) RC	300	106,000	27	18	5
Old Believer, Old Ritualist RC	3,300	1,957,000	25	19	10
Old Catholic RC	1,100	886,000	26	19	10
Reformed Catholic, retaining Roman Catholic claims RC	9,500	5,110,000	16	11	3
Independent Bulgarian Orthodox OR	200	500,000	1	1	1
Independent Estonian Orthodox OR	10	9,000	2	2	1
Independent Greek Orthodox OR	20	16,000	2	1	2
Independent Hungarian Orthodox OR	1	1,000	1	1	1
Independent Macedonian Orthodox	3	1,000	1	1	1
Independent Moldavian Orthodox OR	40	630,000	1	1	1
Independent Assyrian or Nestorian (East Syrian) OR	100	74,000	5	3	5
Old Calendarist Authentic Orthodox OR	300	261,000	8	4	5
schism from Orthodoxy, in Protestant direction OR	300	95,000	28	6	20
Orthodox sect/sectarian OR	900	139,000	30	3	15
Reformed Orthodox (uncanonical reform movement) OR	1800	1,023,000	23	15	12
Independent Romanian Orthodox OR	100	110,000	3	3	1
Independent Russian Orthodox OR	700	921,000	32	30	3
Independent Serbian Orthodox OR	50	34,000	5	5	1
True Orthodox (devoutly conservative Russian Orthodox) OR	8,100	358,000	6	4	2
Independent Ukrainian Orthodox OR	3,400	6,324,000	24	18	3
Totals: 24 8 RC 16 OR	51,654	23,253,673	710 172 RC 538 OR	-	

Estimated number of denominations for both Orthodox and Roman Catholic independent. This was calculated using rough averages but is likely reasonably accurate. Note that we also took the middle of high and low figures, meaning that we took the conservative road with the data.

140
66 RC
74 OR

(Table 1-5: David A. Barrett, World Christian Encyclopedia, 2001, p 16-18)

E. Apples to Apples comparisons when quoting Barrett's 30,000 denominations figure:

1. If Roman Catholic and Orthodox tradition defenders say there are 30,000 Protestant denominations, (table 1-3) this is factually in error, since Barrett says there are 8848 Protestant denominations.
2. **Apples to Apples A:** If Roman Catholic and Orthodox tradition defenders say there are 30,000 Protestant denominations (column 11, table 1-3), then the apples to apples number that corresponds to them in table 1-3 is a total of **1712** Roman Catholic and Orthodox denominations. (410 Roman Catholic + 1302 Orthodox = 1712) Remember, you must add in the total number of 710 independent splits from the Roman Catholic (172) and Orthodox (538) churches traditions. Remember, however, that Barrett counts a single unified sect in three different countries as a count of 3 denominations in column 11, so a single denomination in 238 countries, would be counted by Barrett as having 238 denominations in column 11. Column 11, therefore is not helpful by itself in determining actual denominations in the classical sense.
3. **Apples to Apples B:** To calculate the actual number of Roman Catholic and Orthodox denominations, we need to use column 2, table 1-5 from Barrett's work. Barrett notes that although under one head, even the Roman Catholic are divided into 22 different denominations with varying liturgy and the Orthodox church under Constantinople/ Ecumenical Patriarch has 25 variations. We add to this the independent splits, not in communion with the mother churches (Rome and Constantinople) There are 66 independent denominations that are "Roman Catholic like" and 74 independent denominations that are "Orthodox like".
4. **Apples to Apples C:** If Roman Catholics object to our counting those under Rome as 22 denominations and Orthodox object to our counting those under Constantinople as having 25 variations, then we have created a third comparison that will quell the whining. In Comparison #3, we counted all the divisions under Rome and Constantinople as one each. Here we merely added the schisms in column 2 of table 1-5 in the "independent" category.

	Comparison #1	Comparison #2	Comparison #3
.	Denominations: Apples to Apples A (column 11, table 1-3)	Denominations: Apples to Apples B (table 1-5)	Denominations: Apples to Apples C (table 1-5)
Roman Catholic	238 + 172 = 410 (172 from independent)	88 (22 variations under the	67 (The 22 variations under the Rome/Pope

		Rome/Pope + 66 from independent)	counted as 1 + 66 from independent)
Orthodox	764 + 538 = 1302 (538 from independent)	99 (25 variations under Constantinople/ Ecumenical Patriarch + 74 from independent)	75 (25 variations under Constantinople/ Ecumenical Patriarch counted as 1 + 74 from independent)
Protestant	8848	27	27
Independent	21,582 - 710 = 20,872 (710 total RC and Orthodox)	209- 24 = 185 (24 from column 2 in table 1-5)	209- 24 = 185 (24 from column 2 in table 1-5)

F. Baptists, Calvinists side with the Catholic traditionalists:

Inward Witness Creedalists claim using the Bible alone causes religious division: [Inward Witness Creedalists](#) are a dangerous bunch because they infect others with their self deception. On one hand they say scripture is understandable, yet they claim you cannot understand the Bible without the Holy Spirit. On one hand they criticize the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches for keeping the Bible out of the hands of the masses, yet claim that only their own denominations got the doctrine right.

"Perhaps the best way to explain the fundamental problem with the modern Evangelical version of solo scriptura would be through the use of an illustration to which many believers may be able to relate. Almost every Christian who has wrestled with theological questions has encountered the problem of competing interpretations of Scripture. If one asks a dispensationalist pastor, for example, why he teaches premillennialism, the answer will be, "Because the Bible teaches premillennialism:" If one asks the conservative Presbyterian pastor across the street why he teaches amillennialism (or postmillennialism), the answer will likely be, "Because that is what the Bible teaches." Each man will claim that the other is in error, but by what ultimate authority do they typically make such a judgment? Each man will claim that he bases his judgment on the authority of the Bible, but since each man's interpretation is mutually exclusive of the other's, both interpretations cannot be correct. How then do we discern which interpretation is correct? The typical modern Evangelical solution to this problem is to tell the inquirer to examine the arguments on both sides and decide which of them is closest to the teaching of Scripture. He is told that this is what sola scriptura means-to individually evaluate all doctrines according to the only authority, the Scripture. Yet in reality, all that occurs is that one Christian measures the scriptural interpretations of other Christians against the standard of his own scriptural interpretation. Rather than placing the final authority in Scripture as it intends to do, this concept of Scripture places the final authority in the reason and judgment of each individual believer. The result is the relativism, subjectivism, and theological chaos that we see in modern Evangelicalism today." (The Shape Of Sola Scriptura, Keith A. Mathison, Reformed Protestant, 2001, p 239)

Conclusion:

1. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches have no "high moral ground" upon which to walk when it comes to denominationalism. They are highly divided even within their own ranks.
2. If traditionalists claim there are 30,000 Protestant denominations, then apples to apples, there are 1712 traditionalist denominations. (410 Roman Catholic + 1302 Orthodox = 1712) An apples to apples comparison would look like this:

Table "Conclusion A"

Type	Number of denominations
Roman Catholic	410
Orthodox	1302
Protestant	8848
Independent	20,872

3. In fact, there are 22 different liturgies under the Bishop of Rome's (Roman Catholic) authority and there are 25 different liturgies that are in direct "communion" with the Ecumenical Patriarch at Constantinople. Adding the schisms listed in the "independent" section of our column: "A Estimated actual # of denominations" (74 Orthodox and 66 Catholic), an apples to apples comparison would look like this:

Table "Conclusion B"

Type	Number of denominations
Roman Catholic	88
Orthodox	99
Protestant	27
Independent	185

4. If Traditionalists complain we cannot count all those under Roman Catholic control as 22 denominations, and 25 in communion with the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch, we have modified the data to appease this complaint purely for the sake of argument. In addition to this variation within each of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches (to which we are willing for the moment to turn a blind eye and count as 1), there are an additional 66 independent schismatic Roman Catholic churches and additional 74 independent schismatic Orthodox churches. An apples to apples comparison would then look like this,

and we note, this is as good as it can possibly get for traditionalists and it still looks bad for them:

Table "Conclusion C"

Type	Number of denominations
Roman Catholic	67
Orthodox	75
Protestant	27
Independent	185

5. By merely counting the broad categories of communions listed column "2 Name" of table 1-5 and adding the independent schisms an apples to apples comparison would look like this:

Table "Conclusion D"

Type	Number of denominations
Roman Catholic	30
Orthodox	41
Protestant	27
Independent	185

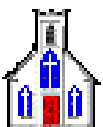
6. If Traditionalists complain that in [Table "Conclusion D"](#) we cannot count all those under Roman Catholic control as 22 denominations, and 25 in communion with the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch, we have modified the data to appease this complaint purely for the sake of argument. We add the 8 Roman Catholic and the 16 Orthodox churches to arrive at this apples comparison:

Table "Conclusion E"

Type	Number of denominations
Roman Catholic	9
Orthodox	17
Protestant	27
Independent	185

7. It is obvious therefore, that the Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders are guilty of the very thing they charge Protestants of: **religious division**.
8. Any tradition defender who claims "apostolic oral tradition and succession" is a superior system to sola Scriptura for determining truth and liturgy, is either dishonest or ignorant of the facts.
9. We note that none of the "Protestant" groups listed are genuine sola Scriptura, but like Traditionalists, rely upon human creeds. We classify all the Protestants as "[pseudo sola Scriptura](#)" since although they claim to operate under the principle of sola Scriptura, in practice they are as tradition and creed bound as Roman Catholic and Orthodox.
10. We note that the almost all of the "Independent" groups listed in table 1-5 are "[pseudo sola Scriptura](#)" who use creeds and claim direct inspiration from the Holy Spirit for determining truth.
11. A careful examining of the 209 denominations listed in the "Independent" category of table 1-5, are Charismatic/Pentecostal. These are certainly not sola Scriptura type churches, since they rely more on direct revelation from the Holy Spirit for truth, then the scriptures themselves. Anyone who has studied with these groups knows that it matters little what the scriptures say because they always reply, "Your view of scripture must be wrong, because our church has the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit and therefore our view must be right."
12. Only sola Scriptura will bring about unity of faith world wide. Tradition has failed the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. Creeds have failed the Protestants.
13. So arranging the data to discriminate between true sola Scriptura, Pseudo sola Scriptura, and traditionalist, you come up with the following comparison:

Table "Conclusion F"	
Type	Number of denominations
Traditionalist	142
Pseudo sola Scriptura (Protestant, Reform, Baptist etc)	27
Non sola Scriptura (Charismatic/ Pentecostal)	184
Sola Scriptura	1



• [Click here to find a congregation of this one sola Scriptura church](#) in your own home town!

•

•

•

Refuted



[More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)

Refuted



[More Pro-Oral Church tradition arguments refuted!](#)

by [Steve Rudd](#) (click to email your comments)

The screenshot shows a website interface with the title "Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone" in red cursive. On the left, there is a sidebar with several options: "Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!", "Request FREE Bible study course by Mail", "Information about who we are!", "Assembly locations of Christians near you.", "Telephone hotlines in your own home town.", and "Contact E-mail study partner nearest you." The main content area features a grid of icons and text: "Start here", "Defending the Bible", "Sola Scriptura Debates", "Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura", "Stumper Questions", "All Creeds Dangerous", "Traditions Dangerous", "Church Illuminated", "100 AD 27 Book Bible Canon", "Sola Scriptura Proof Texts", "Read Bible to Understand", and "Holy Spirit Illumination". At the bottom, there are two red buttons: "SEARCH this local site" and "LINK to this site".

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Anti-Sola Scriptura Arguments Refuted:



"Luther and Calvin contradicted themselves because they claimed to use the Bible only, then went on to write creeds in addition to the Bible."

False arguments that Catholics and Orthodox use to trash Sola Scriptura are refuted.

Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!



- [More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- A list of [Sola Scriptura proof texts](#).
- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)



"Luther and Calvin contradicted themselves because they claimed to use the Bible only, then went on to write creeds in addition to the Bible."

"Though he may have coined the slogan, the fact is that Luther himself did not practice Sola Scriptura. If he had, he'd have tossed out the Creeds and spent less time writing commentaries." (Which Came First: The Church or the New Testament?, Fr. James Bernstein, Orthodox churchman, 1994, p 21)

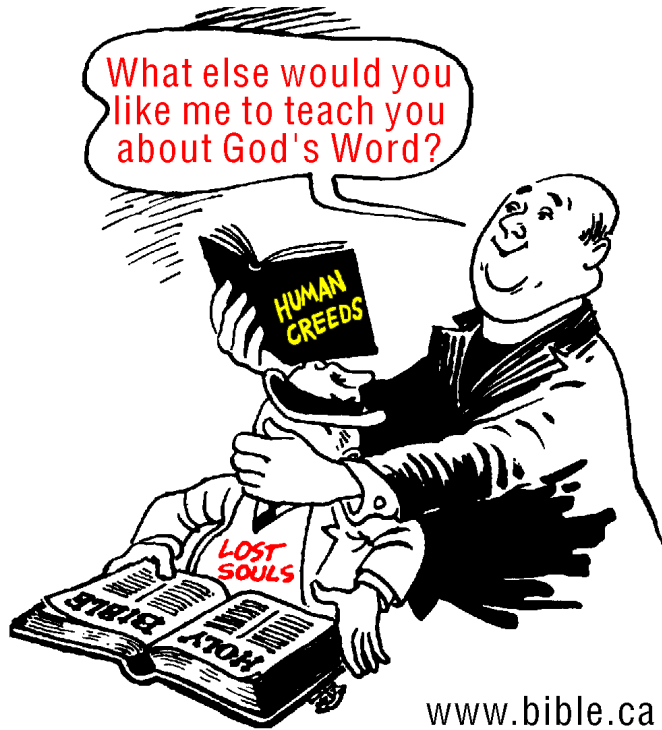


Refutation of the false Roman Catholic and Orthodox argument:

"Luther and Calvin contradicted themselves because they claimed to use the Bible only, then went on to write creeds in addition to the Bible."

Sola Scriptura: Luther and Calvin indeed contradicted themselves when they used creeds in addition to the Bible!

1. We completely agree with this criticism. Luther merely replaced Catholic creedalism with a system of his own. Luther and Calvin practiced "pseudo-Sola Scriptura" because they did use creeds in addition to the Bible.
2. Anti-sola Scriptura proponents, merely point out the error in Luther's consistency, without changing the fact that Luther was indeed right in advocating the Bible alone. Just for the record, all our churches have absolutely no creeds, not even the Nicene or Apostles Creed! So not only do we use the Bible alone, unlike Luther, we are above criticism because we are totally anti-creed. We also have a much higher level of doctrinal unity, than is seen in those churches that use creeds!
3. So Catholics/Orthodox and Luther/Calvin are two versions of the same kind of problem: Creedalism. Neither groups are true Sola Scriptura!
4. [Click to learn why all creeds are evil.](#)



Luther and Calvin merely replaced Catholic creedalism with a system of his own. Luther and Calvin practiced "pseudo-Sola Scriptura" because they did use creeds in addition to the Bible.

● [Find a true Sola Scriptura local church](#) in your own home town.


Refuted
🔊 [More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)

Refuted
🔊 [More Pro-Oral Church tradition arguments refuted!](#)


by Steve Rudd

False Doctrines

(that first century Christians never believed)




← Truth



Contact us

Ask a Bible Question
Request Bible study,
Comments, Suggestions




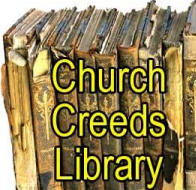





Who are we ?



Find



a church near you

 Roman Catholic Examined	 Sabbath Keepers Refuted	 Mormon Nephi Plates Exposed	 Jehovah's Witness Apostate Alert
 Church Creeds Library	 Myths of Islam	 Psychiatry That Fixed It!	 Evolution
 20th Century Tongues	 THE COMING FOUR BLOOD MOONS REFUTED JOHN HAGEE	 TULIP	 Neo-Sadduceeism No Spirit, Hell Annihilation & Extinction Refuted

SEARCH this local site
LINK to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Anti-Sola Scriptura Arguments Refuted:



"Sola Scriptura advocates hypocritically deny the authority of the Catholic and Orthodox church organizations, then claim their own church's organization has authority."

False arguments that Catholics and Orthodox use to trash Sola Scriptura are refuted.

Sola Scriptura proven from the Bible!



- [More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- A list of [Sola Scriptura proof texts](#).
- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)



"Sola Scriptura advocates hypocritically deny the authority of the Catholic and Orthodox church organizations, then claim their own church's organization has authority."

"Given their commitment to sola scriptura, it is interesting to see how far Protestants will bend over backwards, at times, to affirm their commitment to ecclesiastical authority. At times, their statements, if taken in isolation, can sound almost Catholic." (Philip Blosser, Philosophical and Practical Problems with Sola Scriptura, 1998)



Refutation of the false Roman Catholic and Orthodox argument:

"Sola Scriptura advocates hypocritically deny the authority of the Catholic and Orthodox church organizations, then claim their own church's organization has authority."

The local church is the largest unit of organization in scripture.

1. While this may apply to Reform Protestants etc, this certainly does not apply to us.
2. The Bible's teaching on church authority is something so foreign to Roman Catholics and Orthodox, they may have to literally sit down and think about it for a moment to even begin to grasp it. Not because it is new or difficult, but because it is so simple.
3. In the Bible, the church had no organization larger than the local church which consisted of a plurality of elders, (who were also called bishops and pastors) ruling over the local church.
4. The congregation is to chose their own elders based upon a list of qualifications in 1 Tim 3 and Tit 1.
5. In addition to these elders a congregation may (or may not) have one or more paid pulpit preachers who are called "ministers, evangelists, preachers". These men have no

oversight in the congregation but because of their role as preachers of the gospel from the Lord's day pulpit, they do have significant influence.

6. Although Christians in the local church are told to submit to these elders/overseers, that does not mean that they are free to practice things not found in the Bible. Should they do such, the congregation who appointed them, can remove them from their office.
7. So the congregation will submit to the elders on the basis that the elders are faithfully teaching the Bible.
8. In the Bible, overseers therefore, are not a power unto themselves over the congregation as we see in most denominations.
9. The congregation as a whole under the guidance of the elders and the spiritual insights of the pulpit preacher (who is also called preacher and minister) form a collective unit with a functioning common treasury from weekly freewill contributions.
10. Should any member, including the elder/overseers begin to live in an immoral way or teach heresy, the pattern of Matthew 18 must be followed to "mark them".
11. So this is the simple new testament pattern of church origination in the Bible.
12. The local church is the pillar and support of the truth, however we must be careful to separate her function of supporting truth, from the truth itself she upholds. The church is not the source of truth as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches teach, but the proclaimer of scripture to the world.

Refuted



[More Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)

Refuted




[More Pro-Oral Church tradition arguments refuted!](#)


by Steve Rudd

False Doctrines

(that first century Christians never believed)




← Truth




Contact us

Ask a Bible Question
Request Bible study,
Comments, Suggestions




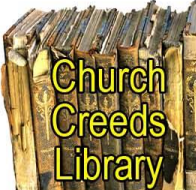






Who are we ?



Find



a church
near you

 Roman Catholic Examined	 Sabbath Keepers Refuted	 Mormon Nephi Plates Exposed	 Jehovah's Witness Apostate Alert
 Church Creeds Library	 Myths of Islam	 Psychiatry That Fixed It!	 Evolution
 20th Century Tongues	 THE COMING FOUR BLOOD MOONS REFUTED JOHN HAGEE	 TULIP	 Neo-Sadduceeism No Spirit, Hell Annihilation & Extinction Refuted

SEARCH this local site
LINK to this site

Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA

Sola Scriptura: The failure of extra-biblical oral church traditions

Tradition is only valid, when it mirrors scripture, not adds to it or changes it!



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

A. Our position on scripture and tradition: "The Bible is the mother of Tradition"

Our view is that the scriptures themselves are the all-sufficient and infallible "Rule of Faith" (regula fidei) for every day living, doctrine and liturgy. Tertullian and Jerome started dangerous practices in writing their "Rule of Faith", because these creeds eventually supplanted the authority of the Bible itself. 100% of the information we need for salvation is found in scripture. This means that doctrines and liturgy not taught in scripture are superfluous to the will of God, and range from optional at best to condemned. All traditions are derived from and measured against scripture.

Truth: "The Bible is the mother of Tradition"

False: "Tradition is the mother of the Bible."



[Top ten list of why the Roman Catholic and Orthodox take the wrong view of tradition](#)

B. The Catholic and Orthodox view of tradition: "Tradition is the mother of the Bible."
(priest)

When Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders attach sola Scriptura, they appeal to references to tradition in both scripture and the writings of the Church Fathers. They use these references to justify the introduction of extra-biblical doctrines which they say should not be rejected because they were taught orally by the apostles themselves. Every time they see the word "tradition" they think it destroys the truth of sola Scriptura. There are a number of serious problems with this view. Scripture is also called tradition in the Bible and by the Church Fathers. Even the "Rule of Faith" Creeds were all based directly on scripture phrase by phrase, and never "oral tradition". Finally, there were liturgical traditions that the Church Fathers said were not found in scripture, but oral tradition alone. Amazingly, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches practice almost none of this liturgy today, proving false their claim that their current liturgy came from the apostles.

Today however, the Roman Catholic church, for example rejects both scripture and tradition (as recorded in the apostolic fathers) and claims that truth is determined only by the current practice of the living Pope. When scripture contradicts Catholic teaching and liturgy, they claim we misinterpret scripture. When the tradition of the Church Fathers contradicts Catholic teaching and liturgy, they claim we misinterpret history. Like Jehovah's Witnesses, Catholics believe that the current church organization is inspired and guided by God into truth. Before reading the quote below, make sure you are sitting down with your seat belt on!

"But the **appeal to antiquity is both a treason and a heresy**. It is a treason because it rejects the **Divine voice of the Church at this hour**, and a heresy because it denies that voice to be Divine. How can we know what antiquity was except through the Church? ... I may say in strict truth that **the Church has no antiquity**. It rests upon its own supernatural and perpetual consciousness. ... **The only Divine evidence to us of what was primitive is the witness and voice of the Church at**

this hour." (Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost: Or Reason and Revelation, 1865, p 227-228)

C. Jesus condemned the error of using tradition: Catholic/Orthodox are guilty!

"The entire Roman Catholic argument depends upon the assumption that Rome could not do what Israel did. The problem is that in reality she has done exactly what Israel did. She has placed herself in precisely the same position that the Scribes and Pharisees found themselves in. Their oral law or tradition was so "synthesized" to the written Torah, that judgment of the validity of that unwritten law by means of the written law became an impossibility. Neither could judge the other because both were assumed to have originated with Moses. In the same way Rome has developed an unwritten tradition that she has synthesized with the written New Testament to the degree that it cannot be judged by that New Testament. If Mark 7 teaches us anything, it is that the two must not be "synthesized." The written Word of God must remain the unique norm." (The Shape Of Sola Scriptura, Keith A. Mathison, Reformed Protestant, 2001, p 179)

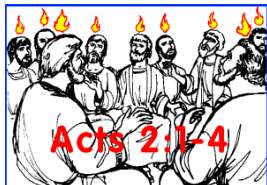


[Doctrinal development is condemned!](#)

The Apostolic Fathers recognized five different kinds of tradition:



[Tradition #1: Scripture.](#) (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)



[Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration.](#) (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)



[Tradition #3: Expedient tradition.](#) (Roman 14:5)



[Tradition #4: Uninspired creeds "Rule of Faith".](#) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)



[Tradition #5: False doctrine tradition.](#) (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5)



[Mistakes made by the Apostolic Fathers based upon tradition](#)

Oral tradition is inherently unreliable over time

We challenge traditionalists to give us one example of one apostolic oral tradition that is still practiced in the church today. Remember, you cannot quote the writings of the apostolic fathers, because that is not oral but written! Since you believe the ecumenical councils were inspired, that doesn't count either. Why should they since they are clearly post-apostolic legislation. Had the apostles taught what the councils said, then they wouldn't have needed the canons!



Roman Catholic and Orthodox "oral tradition" defenders attack the Bible and we defeat them with the sword of the Spirit!

- [Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)
- [Sola Scriptura home page](#)

Extra-Biblical Oral Tradition Arguments Refuted:

Typical Arguments that Catholics & Orthodox use to defend oral tradition are refuted.



"Paul commanded oral tradition to be followed in 2 Thessalonians 2:15"

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"John 20:30 clearly tells us that the Bible lacks many things Jesus did."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"Paul got the names 'Jannes and Jambres' in 2 Timothy 3:8-9, from oral tradition."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"In 2 John 12, John refused to write everything in scripture, but gave them oral traditions."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"2 Timothy 2:2 proves apostolic succession and oral tradition."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"The saying of Jesus in Acts 20:35 came from oral tradition."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"The story of Michael and the Devil over Moses in Jude 9, comes from oral tradition."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"The prophecy in Matthew 2:23, that Jesus would be called a Nazarene, comes from oral tradition only, not scripture."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Moses' Seat is the antitype of the Papal authority. Matthew 23:2"

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Paul quoted an early hymn from tradition in Ephesians 5:14, 'Awake O sleeper'"

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Jews being sawn in two in Hebrews 11:37 came from tradition not scripture."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"We only know the identity of John as the writer of the fourth gospel from tradition"

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"The rock of the wilderness that followed them was recorded only in Jewish tradition, not scripture. 1 Corinthians 10:4."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Only oral tradition knew that all the prophets were persecuted in Acts 7:52."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Only oral tradition gave the duration of Elijah's drought in James 5:17 as 3 1/2 years."

Refuted

[CLICK HERE](#)



"Sola Scriptura is impossible since only 10% of people could read in 100 AD"

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"Sola Scriptura is impossible because there were so few Bibles in circulation until the printing press was invented in the 16th century."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



"Widespread malnutrition of the first three centuries crippled the thinking ability of the average Christian to engage in Bible study."

Refuted



[CLICK HERE](#)



See Also: [Anti-Sola Scriptura arguments refuted!](#)

Refuted



by Steve Rudd



Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Top ten list of why the Roman Catholic and Orthodox take the wrong view of tradition



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

Top ten list of why the Roman Catholic and Orthodox take the wrong view of tradition

1. Scripture itself is called "apostolic tradition" both in the Bible and the Church Fathers. It is wrong to assume every time the fathers used the word "tradition", that they are referring exclusively to "oral tradition" and not scripture.
2. The Church Fathers continued to quote scripture to refute the Gnostics and the Arians even after they misquoted scriptures of their own. The idea that the early church gave up on "proof-texting" to fight heresy and began to rely upon tradition is utterly false.
3. The "Rule of Faith" creeds drafted by the post apostolic church were 100% based upon scripture phrase by phrase. The idea that they had their origin in extra-biblical oral tradition is utterly false.

4. It is wrong to view creeds, like the Nicene creed, as proof that oral tradition continues today, since these creeds were in fact written down and being written, were no longer "oral" traditions!
5. When the Church Fathers made reference to a "oral apostolic tradition" separate from scripture, they always viewed such tradition as duplicating what the apostles later revealed in scripture as a parallel witness. In other words, all doctrines that originated from apostolic oral traditions were finally recorded in the text of scripture. The substance of Oral tradition doctrines is identical with scripture.
6. When the Church Fathers made reference to liturgical "traditions" that were not taught in scripture, they were optional and unnecessary things like drinking milk mixed with honey after being baptized, making the sign of the cross on the forehead, and never kneeling in worship. Although sola Scriptura advocates can confidently say the fathers mistakenly viewed such "traditions" as binding, Roman Catholic and Orthodox "tradition advocates" have no choice but to also take them as binding. Yet in theological schizophrenia, they claim the "tradition of the Church Fathers" must be followed, but then refuse to follow the specific traditions that the Church Fathers recorded.
7. Virtually all the apostolic fathers viewed a progressive sequence of revelation passing through three stages: 1. Oral teachings of Christ to his apostles. 2. Oral teachings of the apostles based upon Christ's oral tradition and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for new information Christ never discussed. 3. All of Christ's and the apostles teachings were recorded in scripture. The early post-apostolic church viewed scripture as the final process of complete revelation.
8. The Church Fathers viewed the scriptures as all sufficient and complete.
9. The Church Fathers believed what Paul said in Eph 3:3-5, that the scripture could be understood by merely reading it. They indicated that the scriptures themselves were clear, so clear, they even criticized the heretics for getting it wrong. If those outside the church and common pew dwellers are unable to understand the Bible themselves as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches teach, then why did the church expect the heretics to understand the Bible with their own human skills? (Tertullian, The Flesh of Christ, ch 20), (Athanasius, On the Incarnation of the Word, 56), (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 1, 35), (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 7, 16)
10. When Basil and the Arians both claimed their tradition was correct, Basil said, "**let God-inspired Scripture decide between us; and on whichever side be found doctrines in harmony with the word of God, in favour of that side will be cast the vote of truth.**" (Basil, Letter 189, 3) This proves that scripture was viewed by the Church Fathers as the supreme court of determining truth, when traditions contradict each other. Today, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches each claim their tradition is the "true apostolic tradition". They would do well to follow the advice of Basil and let scripture decide!

By Steve Rudd

False Doctrines

(that first century Christians never believed)

← Truth

Contact us

Ask a Bible Question
Request Bible study,
Comments, Suggestions

Who are we ?

Find

a church near you

 Roman Catholic Examined	 Sabbath Keepers Refuted	 Mormon Nephi Plates Exposed	 Jehovah's Witness Apostate Alert
 Church Creeds Library	 Myths of Islam	 Psychiatry That Fixed It!	 Evolution
 20th Century Tongues	 THE COMING FOUR BLOOD MOONS REFUTED <small>JOHN HAGEE</small>	 TULIP	 No Spirit, Hell <small>Annihilation & Extinction Refuted</small>

SEARCH this local site LINK to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)

● **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition](#).



Mandatory: Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.

Introduction to the Catechism:

In order for our truth to shine through, it is important that Catholic and Orthodox believers understand exactly why their objections to sola Scriptura are invalid when applied to us. So we have created a special catechism class especially for you **so that you will not make the mistake of ever using these invalid objections** as you read the information below regarding the apostolic Fathers view of using "scripture only" as the only source of doctrinal authority.

Catechism Question #1:

When you see the word "tradition" used by the fathers, why is often of no power in refuting sola Scriptura?

Answer: When the fathers would refer to "tradition" often they referred to scripture itself! This should not surprise us since the Bible calls scripture "tradition" in 2 Thess 2:15! Furthermore, Athanasius, for example, call scripture tradition: "**the Apostolic tradition teaches in the words of blessed Peter**, 'Forasmuch then as Christ suffered for us in the Flesh' Athanasius then quotes: 1 Peter 4:1; Titus 2:13; Heb 2:1 (Athanasius, To Adelphius, Letter 60, 6)? So you need not make irresponsible conclusions because of your superficial approach to how the fathers used the word "tradition". Yes, the word "tradition" is used by the Fathers to refer to things distinct from scripture, but as you will see, Catholics and Orthodox defenders don't even practice them today!

Catechism Question #2:

Why is merely pointing out the fact that some of the apostolic fathers mention "oral tradition" in distinction from the Bible, of no power in refuting sola Scriptura?

Answer: Because the [apostolic fathers believed in five different kinds of tradition](#): **1.** The fathers speak of the scriptures themselves as being apostolic tradition. **2.** Inspired oral tradition that came from the mouth of the apostles and prophets that, although never differs from, or adds to scripture, may be a unique way of expressing the same thoughts. **3.** Expedient man-made tradition that is optional and not a matter of faith, since the apostles were silent about such matter. These include giving a person a cup of milk mixed with honey immediately following baptism and then not bathing for a week. (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4) This 3rd category of tradition is spoken of as not recorded in scripture, but even your own leaders do not follow it today. **4.** "Rule of faith" tradition where the Christians made short uninspired summaries of the faith based directly upon the inspired written and oral traditions of the apostles and prophets. These would have the same type of origin, as a sermon outline based upon the scripture.

Catechism Question #3:

Why is merely pointing out the fact that both Irenaeus and Tertullian had extra-biblical creeds that were "oral traditions" in distinction from the Bible, of no power in refuting sola Scriptura?

Answer: The only traditions that the apostolic fathers said were distinct from scripture were "Expedient tradition" that is optional and not a matter of faith. The specific doctrines that are mentioned by the fathers are: giving a person a cup of milk mixed with honey immediately following baptism and then not bathing for a week. Of course if Orthodox and Catholic defenders argue that this is apostolic oral tradition, we would ask, "Then why don't you do the same today?"

Catechism Question #4:

Why is pointing out the fact that many of the Fathers **whom we use as examples of sola Scriptura**, then go on and discuss a number of "catholic type" doctrines, of no power in refuting sola Scriptura?

Answer: All Roman Catholic or Orthodox priests think their doctrine is taught in scripture, even though many clearly are not. Do you really expect these leaders to come out and say, "The bible doesn't talk about these doctrines, they are only found in oral traditions." Name one doctrine that Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders claim is not taught in scripture! Why they have Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist doing "hail Mary's" on her rosary. So the fact that Fathers believed and practiced many false doctrines not found in scripture, even contradicting scripture, THEN CLAIMING it all came from the Bible, is truly about as Catholic as it gets! We agree! The Fathers and modern Catholics and Orthodox leaders believe all their false doctrines are found in the Bible! But now for the devastating blow to these traditionalist defenders. (And this is way more profound than they will initially comprehend.) **Notice that although the church Fathers clearly taught things that were not in the Bible, they still upheld the principle of sola Scriptura because they truly (but mistakenly) thought that the doctrines had scriptural support.** Had they said the doctrines of transubstantiation, the Mass, apostolic succession of bishops, the papacy, Mariolatry were not taught in the Bible, but oral tradition alone, only then would their argument even be worth considering. But since all the Fathers believed their doctrines all came from scripture, this actually proves they used sola Scriptura, and not oral traditions. Until Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders are prepared to admit in writing which "Catholic doctrines" (ie mass, real presence, praying to Mary as the co-mediatrix), we suggest they never use this argument again. But of course these Catholic defenders shoot themselves in the foot every time they go to scripture to prove their doctrines! It would be better to say, "hey none of this stuff is found in the Bible, it is oral tradition alone!"

Catechism Question #5:

Why is saying, "**if the apostolic fathers believed in using the Bible alone for doctrine, they did a rather poor job of it, since they practiced many things that were not in the Bible!**" of no power in refuting TRUE sola Scriptura? Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders continue: "The Church Fathers believed things that are diametrically opposed to what sola Scriptura advocates believe

today?" (Catholics and Orthodox will supply a list of doctrines like: Baptism for the remission of sins, Transubstantiation, the Mass as a necessary sacrifice, apostolic succession of bishops, the papacy, all the nuances of Mariolatry etc.) They continue: "Therefore, if sola Scriptura Protestants claim that the apostolic fathers used the "Tradition of the Church" and creeds to interpret Scripture, then they must also conclude that the Fathers did a lousy job of applying tradition to Scripture. These sola Scriptura Protestants are trapped in a major dilemma."

Answer: Foremost, while scripture clearly teaches [baptism for the remission of sins](#), none of the other doctrines mentioned above can be traced back to the apostles, but are clearly man made doctrines that had their origin no earlier than 150 - 400 AD. (click for proof these doctrines are not in the Bible: [Transubstantiation \(real presence in eucharist\)](#), the Mass as a necessary sacrifice, [apostolic succession of bishops](#), the [papacy](#), all the nuances of [Mariolatry](#) etc.) Having said this, the Catholic/Orthodox argument still only defeats [pseudo-sola Scriptura](#) (Calvinists, Reformed, Protestants, Lutherans) **and not us.** ([true sola Scriptura](#)) Pseudo-sola Scriptura teaches that the early creeds and councils are to be followed today as a "rule of faith". **Since we reject the authority all creeds and councils**, and abide by the scripture alone, extra-biblical doctrines taught by the Fathers only reinforces a central point: [All creeds are dangerous!](#) In other words, our thesis is founded upon 1 Tim 4:1-4 and 2 Tim 4:1-5: The Holy Spirit predicted a gradual falling away from faith. Having said this, the fact remains that the apostolic fathers did believe in using the Bible alone in determining doctrine! Since Calvinists, Reformed, Protestants, Lutherans accept the authority of the early creeds, they simply cannot explain away the dilemma posed by Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders. We suggest that these Pseudo-sola Scriptura churches either join us by giving up on all creeds or disband and join the either the Catholic or Orthodox church. But this argument affects us none! And we would counter by supplying a list of doctrines that the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches practice [that contradict scripture](#) or are [changes from the first century](#).

Catechism Question #6:

Why is this often used Roman Catholic/Orthodox argument against our use of the Fathers to prove they used sola Scriptura completely invalid: *"Using quotes from Irenaeus, Athanasius, Augustine, Basil and Cyril etc. that appear to prove they used the Bible only, are rendered irrelevant when you observe the fact that they also taught many "Catholic type" doctrines which sola Scriptura advocates reject as not taught in the Bible."*

Answer: The fathers, like modern Catholics and Orthodox, were deceived in thinking these doctrines are actually taught in scripture. They are not scriptural, they merely thought they were found in the Bible. But the fact they thought all their key doctrines were found in the Bible actually proves they used the Bible only! So you see, it matters not if the doctrines were in the Bible or not, they were under the impression that the Bible, and not oral tradition were the source of the doctrines. We suggest a little catechism school exercise for all Catholics and Orthodox to complete: Get a paper and draw this chart:

Doctrines the Fathers thought were in the Bible

Doctrines the Fathers said were not in the Bible, but from oral tradition.

- baptism for the remission of sins
- transubstantiation
- the Mass
- apostolic succession
- the papacy
- Mariolatry

continue listing...

- Renouncing the devil before baptism
- Thrice baptism by immersion
- drinking milk and honey after baptism
- no bath for 1 week after baptism
- kneeling in prayer forbidden in worship
- sign of cross on forehead only

continue listing...

Catholics and Orthodox will get the shock of their life when they complete this chart and learn that the Fathers used sola Scriptura to defend all the doctrines on the left which are still practiced today. Conversely, the doctrines on the right, which they say came from oral tradition and not from the Bible, they no longer practice. This proves once for all that the Fathers used sola Scriptura, even if the doctrines were not found in scripture! Finally, while "oral tradition defenders" claim to follow extra-biblical oral traditions of the Fathers, they, in the height of their own self-deception, actually reject the specific doctrines the Fathers specifically listed as non-biblical oral traditions!

By Steve Rudd

Go To Truth CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

- Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!
- Request FREE Bible study course by Mail
- Information about who we are!
- Assembly locations of Christians near you.
- Telephone hotlines in your own home town.
- Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

Proof Texts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site LINK to this site

Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- Apostolic Fathers: [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- Apostolic Fathers: [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

180 AD: Irenaeus:

1. "We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the Gospel has come down to us, which they did **at one time proclaim in public**, and, at a later period, by the will of God, **handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith**. For it is unlawful to assert that they preached before they possessed "perfect knowledge," as some do even venture to say, boasting themselves as **improvers of the apostles**." (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, book 3, 1, 1)

Irenaeus states that the gospel was first orally revealed, then the gospel was recorded in scriptures and calls the scriptures the "ground and pillar" of faith. This should send shivers up the spine of every Roman Catholic and Orthodox because it is a clear interpretation of 1 Tim 3:15 where the same expression is used of the church. Obviously then, Irenaeus viewed that the church came second in authority under the scriptures. It is also clear that you can make no change from what the apostles teach as it was the unchangeable standard of doctrine.

2. "1. Since therefore we have such proofs, it is not necessary to seek the truth among others which it is easy to obtain from the Church; since the apostles, like a rich man [depositing his money] in a bank, **lodged in her hands most copiously all things pertaining to the truth**: so that every man, whosoever will, can draw from her the water of life. For she is the entrance to life; all others are thieves and robbers. On this account are we bound to avoid *them*, but to make choice of the thing pertaining to the Church with the utmost diligence, and **to lay hold of the tradition of the truth**. For how stands the case? Suppose there arise a dispute relative to some important question among us, **should we not have recourse to the most ancient Churches with which the apostles held constant intercourse,**

and learn from them what is certain and clear in regard to the present question? For how should it be if the apostles themselves had not left us writings? Would it not be necessary, [in that case,] to follow the course of the tradition which they handed down to those to whom they did commit the Churches? 2. To which course many nations of those barbarians who believe in Christ do assent, having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit, without paper or ink, and, carefully preserving the ancient tradition, believing in one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and all things therein, by means of Christ Jesus, the Son of God; who, because of His surpassing love towards His creation, condescended to be born of the virgin, He Himself uniting man through Himself to God, and having suffered under Pontius Pilate, and rising again, and having been received up in splendour, shall come in glory, the Saviour of those who are saved, and the Judge of those who are judged, and sending into eternal fire those who transform the truth, and despise His Father and His advent. Those who, in the absence of written documents, have believed this faith, are barbarians, so far as regards our language; but as regards doctrine, manner, and tenor of life, they are, because of faith, very wise indeed; and they do please God, ordering their conversation in all righteousness, chastity, and wisdom. If any one were to preach to these men the inventions of the heretics, speaking to them in their own language, they would at once stop their ears, and flee as far off as possible, not enduring even to listen to the blasphemous address. Thus, by means of that ancient tradition of the apostles, they do not suffer their mind to conceive anything of the [doctrines suggested by the] portentous language of these teachers, among whom neither Church nor doctrine has ever been established. (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, book 3, 4, 1-2)

Irenaeus identifies that both inspired apostolic oral and written tradition are carefully preserved by the churches in succession over time. It is obvious from the passage that scripture is included in this category of "ancient tradition of the apostles". To say it excludes scripture, as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches say it does, and then say the text only discusses oral tradition, is as unwarranted as it is silly. The oral tradition that is identified in the text is in fact a creed (in blue) that is identical to the scriptures. Had this oral tradition contained a key doctrine not found in scripture, then the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches would have a powerful point. Our view of sola Scriptura is reinforced by this passage. What this passage is talking about happens all the time today when we spontaneously and unexpectedly teach a sinner the gospel in a city park when we have no Bible in hand. We rely on "oral tradition" in the absence of written documents. Had Irenaeus' creed (in blue) included any extra biblical doctrines like, the perpetual virginity and assumption of Mary, infant baptism, triple baptism; the sign of the cross etc., then Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders would still only have a weak argument at best. But since there are no extra biblical doctrines, it actually supports our view that all "inspired apostolic tradition" was also contained in scripture. We are not denying "oral apostolic tradition", we merely say it is identical with scripture.

3. "When, however, they are confuted from the Scriptures, they turn round and accuse these same Scriptures, as if they were not correct, nor of authority, and [assert] that they are ambiguous, and that the truth cannot be extracted from them by those who are ignorant of tradition. For [they allege] that the truth was not delivered by means of written documents, but *vivâ voce*: wherefore also Paul declared, "But we speak wisdom among those that are perfect, but not the wisdom of this world." And this wisdom each one of

them alleges to be the fiction of his own inventing, forsooth; so that, according to their idea, the truth properly resides at one time in Valentinus, at another in Marcion, at another in Cerinthus, then afterwards in Basilides, or has even been indifferently in any other opponent, who could speak nothing pertaining to salvation. For every one of these men, being altogether of a perverse disposition, depraving the system of truth, is not ashamed to preach himself. But, again, **when we refer them to that tradition which originates from the apostles, [and] which is preserved by means of the succession of presbyters in the Churches, they object to tradition**, saying that they themselves are wiser not merely than the presbyters, but even than the apostles, because they have discovered the unadulterated truth. For [they maintain] that the apostles intermingled the things of the law with the words of the Saviour; and that not the apostles alone, but even the Lord Himself, spoke as at one time from the Demiurge, at another from the intermediate place, and yet again from the Pleroma, but that they themselves, indubitably, unsulliedly, and purely, have knowledge of the hidden mystery: this is, indeed, to blaspheme their Creator after a most impudent manner! It comes to this, therefore, **that these men do now consent neither to Scripture nor to tradition**. (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 3, Ch 2, 1-2).

Irenaeus shows that the scriptures were the first line of attack against false teachers who were outright refuted by the written tradition of the apostles. Notice how much these Gnostics sound like Roman Catholic and Orthodox leaders when they say that you cannot understand the Bible UNLESS you have the tradition correct and that the truth was more fully revealed orally than in the scriptures. We have seen this first hand when teaching Roman Catholics and Orthodox. You outright refute them in the scriptures, then the Catholic will reply, "you cannot understand the Bible without our church traditions". When you point out the fact that not only does the Orthodox practice contradict scripture, it contradicts the tradition of history (apostolic fathers), they "**consent neither to Scripture nor to tradition**", just as Irenaeus says the Gnostics do. The tradition that originates from the apostles and is "**preserved succession of presbyters in the Churches**" is not some separate set of teaching distinct from scripture, but the living witness of what the scriptures teach in the local churches. Irenaeus point the Gnostics to the scriptures and they reject it. He then points to the visible doctrine of the church (which is identical to scripture) and they reject it. The Roman Catholic or Orthodox will find no help in Irenaeus for a church tradition that teaches different than scripture.

4. "Since, however, it would be very tedious, in such a volume as this, to reckon up the successions of all the Churches, we do put to confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil self-pleasing, by vainglory, or by blindness and perverse opinion, assemble in unauthorized meetings; [we do this, I say,] by indicating that **tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul**; as also [by pointing out] the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time **by means of the successions of the bishops**. For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its preeminent authority, that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the **apostolical tradition has been preserved continuously** by those [faithful men] who exist everywhere" (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 3, Ch 3, 2).

Irenaeus says we see truth that the "**apostolical tradition has been preserved continuously**". Again, this provides no proof of an oral tradition with a different set of doctrines that are nowhere revealed in the written apostolic tradition (bible). In fact we are quite certain that written apostolic tradition must be included in this statement. Doesn't the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches believe that they preserved the scriptures? Of course they do! If the early church had not preserved the written tradition, we would not even have the scriptures today they would have been lost!

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

- Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!
- Request FREE Bible study course by Mail
- Information about who we are!
- Assembly locations of Christians near you.
- Telephone hotlines in your own home town.
- Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.
- Start here
- Defending the Bible
- Sola Scriptura Debates
- Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura
- Stumper Questions
- All Creeds Dangerous
- Traditions Dangerous
- Church Illuminated
- 100 AD Bible Canon
- Sola Scriptura ProofTexts
- Read Bible to Understand
- Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

The Apostolic Fathers viewed oral tradition as a duplicate of scripture

"So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word *of mouth* or by letter from us." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

Introduction:

It is true that the Apostolic Fathers accepted oral tradition of the apostles as authoritative. However, they believed 100% of apostolic oral tradition (viva voce or living voice) was eventually recorded in scripture. They never indicated that oral tradition was any different or distinct from scripture. Therefore, Christians who advocate Sola Scriptura take the identical view of oral tradition of the apostles, as the Church Fathers did. This is most troubling to Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders of an oral tradition that is distinct from scripture. The Apostolic Fathers in fact viewed oral tradition as a duplicate of scripture.

Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration. (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)

Inspired oral tradition that came from the mouth of the apostles and prophets that, although never differs from, or adds to scripture, may be a unique way of expressing the same thoughts. (So inspired tradition #1 is scripture itself that came from the apostles pen and inspired tradition #2 is the words the spoken orally from the apostles mouths.)

A. The Bible texts that support oral revelation as tradition:

1. Then the Lord stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me, "Behold, **I have put My words in your mouth.** Jeremiah 1:9. **This is a classic Bible verse on oral inspiration, even though Jeremiah also wrote a book. Like the Apostles, even though Jeremiah had an oral tradition, all we know of his work, is what scripture records.**
2. Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and **hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you.** 1 Corinthians 11:2. **Paul delivered these traditions (the gospel) on his second missionary journey in Acts 18:1. This was before any books of the Bible were written so it must refer exclusively to oral tradition.**
3. "So then, brethren, stand firm and **hold to the traditions** which you were taught, **whether by word of mouth** or by letter from us." 2 Thessalonians 2:15. **Both oral and scripture are called traditions.**
4. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and **not according to the tradition** which you received from us." 2 Thessalonians 3:6. **This verse likely includes both oral and scripture tradition as a summary of 2 Thess 2:15.**

5. The things **which you have heard from me** in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2. [Here we have the famous 4 generation discipleship passage: 1. Paul 2. Timothy 3. Faithful men 4. Others.](#) However that which is taught is identical with scripture, even if it was revealed originally as an oral tradition. What was taught within these four generations may have included oral revelation, but this oral doctrine was also taught in scripture. For Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders who see the succession of Bishops or the Pope, look elsewhere! First, the one's who were to be entrusted were, "faithful", not Bishops. Timothy was not a Bishop, was he to chose the next bishops to entrust the oral tradition to them? Second, the office of one bishop over the presbytery, did not exist until after 150 AD. Diocesan bishops, where one bishop was over another did not exist until 250. ([Click here for proof.](#)) So to suggest this passage teaches succession in any Catholic or Orthodox way, is vacuous.
6. "You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*" 2 Timothy 3:14. [This verse would likely refer to oral revelation from Paul's inspired mouth to Timothy.](#)
7. "I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute", Luke 21:12-15 is proves that oral tradition was the norm for the first 20 years of the church.
8. The "with many other words" in Acts 2:40 represent inspired oral traditions that are lost forever. Yet for some time these specific words were likely remembered by many who heard them. There are literally thousands of inspired sermons that the Holy Spirit.
9. "They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching". (Acts 2:42) Although we do not know specifically what the apostles taught at this time, we can be sure it did not differ from what we have in scripture.

B. The fathers speak of oral revelation as being apostolic tradition, which is not in scripture:

1. "Now, what that was which they preached-in other words, what it was which Christ revealed to them-can, as I must here likewise prescribe, properly be proved in no other way than by **those very churches which the apostles rounded in person**, by declaring the gospel to them directly themselves, both **viva voce [living voice]**, as the phrase is, and **subsequently by their epistles**. If, then, these things are so, **it is in the same degree manifest that all doctrine which agrees with the apostolic churches-those moulds and original sources of the faith must be reckoned for truth**, as undoubtedly containing that which the (said) churches received from the apostles, the apostles from Christ, Christ from God. **Whereas all doctrine must be prejudged as false which savours of contrariety to the truth of the churches and apostles of Christ and God**. It remains, then, that we demonstrate whether this doctrine of ours, of which we have now given the rule, has its origin in the tradition of the apostles, and whether all other *doctrines* do not *ipso facto* proceed from falsehood. **We hold communion with the apostolic churches because our doctrine is in no respect different from theirs**. This is our witness of truth." (Tertullian, The prescription against the heretics, Ch 21)
2. This living voice was the inspired voice of Jesus and the apostles which Tertullian say, was then recorded in scripture.

3. Notice the sequence: 1. Living voice of the apostles. 2. subsequently recorded in their epistles. This shows that the Apostolic Fathers viewed the scriptures as containing the totality of the "living voice".
4. Whereas the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches view what they are now as the living voice, Tertullian viewed the living voice as being transferred to scripture. This is just another example of how these modern traditionalist churches are actually unorthodox when the study the apostolic Fathers.

C. The Roman Catholic church claims they are the living voice today!

1. Today the Roman Catholic church has redefined this "living voice" of oral tradition from the actual words spoken by Christ and the apostles, to whatever the Pope says today. "But the appeal to antiquity is both a treason and a heresy. It is a treason because it rejects the Divine voice of the Church at this hour, and a heresy because it denies that voice to be Divine. How can we know what antiquity was except through the Church? ... I may say in strict truth that the Church has no antiquity. It rests upon its own supernatural and perpetual consciousness. ... The only Divine evidence to us of what was primitive is the witness and voice of the Church at this hour." (Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost: Or Reason and Revelation, 1865, p 227-228)

The Apostolic Fathers recognized five different kinds of tradition:



[Tradition #1: Scripture.](#) (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)



[Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration.](#) (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)



[Tradition #3: Expedient tradition.](#) (Roman 14:5)



[Tradition #4: Uninspired creeds "Rule of Faith".](#) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)



[Tradition #5: False doctrine tradition.](#) (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5)



Mistakes made by the Apostolic Fathers based upon tradition

By Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

- Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!
- Request FREE Bible study course by Mail
- Information about who we are!
- Assembly locations of Christians near you.
- Telephone hotlines in your own home town.
- Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD **Sola Scriptura**

27 Book Bible Canon **ProofTexts**

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

The Apostolic Fathers believed in expedient, optional tradition

"So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

Introduction:

Expedient man-made tradition that is optional and not a matter of faith, since the apostles were silent about such matters. (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4) This 4th category of tradition are optional practices usually associated with carrying out specific commands and liturgy that are recorded in scripture. In 200 AD, examples of "expedient tradition" these include giving a person a cup of milk mixed with honey immediately following baptism and then not bathing for a week afterwards. Roman Catholic and Orthodox "Classical Reformation" apologists have a great deal of difficulty explaining why this "oral tradition" should not be followed, since they have only one category of tradition and it must be followed.

Tradition #3: Expedient tradition. (Roman 14:5)

A. Expedient Tradition exists in every church today:

Today, every local church on earth has "expedient tradition". Here is a list of the types of things that are "expedient tradition":

1. how fast songs are sung and the number of songs that are sung
2. how much scripture is read and which scriptures are read
3. if the worship service should start with a prayer or a song
4. The day of "mid week bible study", if the local church decides to even have one.
5. The time of the Sunday worship service can become such a widely practiced standard that when someone visiting from out of town asks what time is your worship service is, you can merely reply: "the scriptural time", and they know exactly when to show up. Of course it is understood that there is no "scriptural time", but because the time is so widely practiced as a "church tradition" it almost appears to be a binding apostolic tradition nowhere recorded in scripture.

This is the mistake the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches make when they look at their current practices. They just assume that because there was a pattern of tradition in the church around 200 AD, that it was a binding and essential apostolic tradition. This is a grave error because the witness of history is such that each region had their own distinct set of the traditions, just as we see in the churches today! These kinds of optional expedients were practiced by Christ, the apostles, the Fathers and every church today. What is most troubling about these liturgical traditions to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, is that there was no uniform pattern anywhere, EVER in the history of the church. Although the Catholics and Orthodox fight over whose liturgy is the apostolic tradition, the truth is, no such uniform tradition ever existed. God deliberately left these liturgical choices up to each local church, otherwise the New Testament would resemble the legalistic system of worship seen in the Law of Moses. We are under the "law of liberty".

B. How Expedient Tradition gets started and becomes law: Roman 14:5

Although Roman 14:5 is dealing with individual differences within a local congregation, it is easy to see how such individual traditions could grow to become widely practiced church traditions and then even as law. The origin of Wednesday night, mid-week bible study, may have started with a single Christian setting aside that time for personal Bible study, worship and prayer. Others wanted to join him and in time a decision was made that a formal time would be set for all members in the local church. Unfortunately this good practice of spending extra Bible study time together as a church, may become an unwritten law and seen on the same level of authority as the first day (Sunday) communion worship services. Most expedient traditions are merely good optional choices, but we must always separate what God requires from the freedom God gives us to chose expedients.

C. Jesus showed that expedient tradition is not law: Mark 7:3,5

"For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders" ... "The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?"" Mark 7:3,5

1. God did not require washing of hands. It was a human origin custom. It was man made doctrine.
2. Jesus knew it was an optional man made law that was being bound upon him.
3. It is interesting that Jesus did not condemn washing of hands as an expedient tradition, he did condemn the binding of the tradition upon others.
4. This is the mistake that too many churches make today by binding their traditions as laws that must be followed.
5. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches are some of the worst offenders in this regard.

D. Challenge to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches:

We would love it if Roman Catholic and Orthodox apologists would actually draft a list of doctrines that they believe which are not found anywhere in scripture but only in the inspired oral tradition of the Apostles and prophets of the first century. Of course, they want it both ways. First they trash the Bible saying it is not a complete guide to doctrine and that we need the "oral tradition of the church". **Then when we draft a list of doctrines that they teach that are not found in the Bible**, rather than just agreeing and pointing to the authority of and extra-Biblical tradition of the church, they suddenly "turn Protestant" on us and start spewing scripture after scripture to at us in an effort to prove their doctrines from the Bible! Such blind deception and hypocrisy!

E. List of expedient traditions mentioned by the Church Fathers:

- 200 AD: Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4
- 400 AD: Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8

"If no passage of Scripture has prescribed it, assuredly custom, which without doubt flowed from tradition, has confirmed it. For how can anything come into use, if it has not first been handed

down? Even in pleading tradition, written authority, you say, must be demanded. Let us inquire, therefore, whether tradition, unless it be written, should not be admitted. Certainly we shall say that it ought not to be admitted, if no cases of other practices which, without any written instrument, we maintain on the ground of tradition alone" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)

"If, for these and other such rules, you insist upon having positive Scripture injunction, you will find none." (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)

"For many other observances of the Churches, which are due to tradition, have acquired the authority of the written law" (Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8)

1. before they are baptized: "solemnly profess that we disown the devil, and his pomp, and his angels" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)
2. immerse three times "thrice immersed" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)
"dipping the head three times in the layer" (Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8)
3. After baptism: drink "(as new-born children) a mixture of milk and honey" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)
"tasting milk and honey in representation of infancy" (Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8)
4. After baptism: "from that day we refrain from the daily bath for a whole week" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)
5. "as the anniversary comes round, we make offerings for the dead as birthday honours" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)
6. "ceasing from fasting every Pentecost". (Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8)
"fasting ... in worship on the Lord's day to be unlawful" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)
7. "the practices of standing up in worship on the Lord's day" (Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8)
"kneeling in worship on the Lord's day to be unlawful" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)
8. "We feel pained should any wine or bread, even though our own, be cast upon the ground" (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)
9. "At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon the forehead the sign." (of the cross) (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)

Summary:

1. For the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches teach the doctrine of "oral tradition" yet not keep the specific oral traditions listed by Tertullian and Jerome, is all the proof anyone needs to conclude they are a tradition unto themselves, regardless of what the Bible says or the Church Fathers.
2. We give the Catholic church a score of zero because they rejected all these traditions and replaced them with new ones never practiced by anyone.

3. We give the Orthodox a score of 20% because they correctly immerse as the Bible says, and practice thrice immersion as tradition states, but we deduced 5% because thrice immersion (immersed three times) is not necessary, since the Bible records a universal pattern of being single baptism. (Jesus died, was buried and raised only once.). We also deduced 5% because renouncing the Devil is now found in scripture when one is baptized.

Practice from Tradition	Orthodox	Catholic
disown the devil before baptism	✓	✗
thrice immersed	✓	✗
Drink milk and honey after baptism	✗	✗
don't bath for a week after baptism	✗	✗
kneeling in worship is forbidden	✓	✗
Sign of cross on forehead	✗	✗
SCORE	50%	0%
What percentage of the oral tradition in 200 AD do Orthodox and Catholic keep today? Worse still, the traditions of Orthodox and Catholic today contradict each other!		
Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4 Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8		

- As you can see from the chart above, neither Orthodox or Catholic keep the oral tradition of the 2nd century AD. Catholics keep none of it and Orthodox keep 50% of it! Worse still, both these church fight with protestants that you must use their oral tradition but the Orthodox and Catholic oral traditions DIFFER WITH EACH OTHER!!!
- IF ORAL TRADITION IS AUTHORTATIVE, HOW ARE OUTSIDERS SUPPOSED TO KNOW WHICH OF THESE TWO ORAL TRADITIONS IS CORRECT? The solution is that oral tradition is worthless and what we are left with is the BIBLE ALONE.

F. Full texts with detailed discussion:

1. We love this statement by Tertullian because it proves our point that he used the Bible only to determine doctrine to the exclusion of oral tradition. Now we are actually shocked that Roman Catholic and Orthodox apologists would ever want to refer to this text because it utterly refutes their claim that there is an oral tradition with doctrines that are distinct from, and missing from scripture! If these anti-sola Scriptura advocates are correct, that we must follow, as Tertullian did, "tradition" then why do neither the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches say as a matter of liturgy before they are baptized: "**solemnly profess that we disown the devil**". Why do Orthodox immerse three times ... just as Tertullian says you should do in tradition, "**thrice immersed**" yet the Catholics reject this tradition and sprinkle once? After being baptized, why do both the Catholic and Orthodox churches disobey "Tertullian's apostolic tradition" by not "**a mixture of milk and honey, and from that day we refrain from the daily bath for a whole week**"? In fact they all disobey this apostolic tradition and take a bath as soon as they get home after being baptized! What heresy! Of course, the liturgy of "triple baptism" is not taught in scripture any more than drinking milk/honey and not bathing for a week. These represent localized customs that are expedient. All churches have localized customs and they vary, from congregation to congregation. Remember, there are three kinds of tradition that the apostolic fathers refer to. This is the second type of tradition that is optional because it involves human origin choices that God cares nothing about. Like Tertullian said, "**we trace upon the forehead the sign. If, for these and other such rules, you insist upon having positive Scripture injunction, you will find none**". That's because it is optional for local churches and individual Christians to do. Indeed, even the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches do not make the "sign of the cross on the forehead" as was the "apostolic tradition", rather they changed the "apostolic tradition" and started making the sign of the cross on the chest! It is these expedient things that are "tradition" and clearly optional that scripture is silent about. Other examples of tradition in this same category today, might be making sure the temperature of the water in the baptistery is exactly 77 degrees; holding the person being baptized under water for exactly three second, one for the Father, one for the Son and one for the Holy Spirit. So this very passage by Tertullian that Roman Catholic and Orthodox anti-sola Scriptura advocates quote to disprove sola Scriptura, in fact refutes them! This passage also clearly shows the category of "tradition" that all the "Apostolic Fathers" viewed was not found in scripture. Unlike "classical reformers" like Keith A. Matheson, who stated in his book, "The shape of sola Scriptura", that it is important to maintain the oral traditions of the post-apostolic church, we reject this completely because there was a clear and steady drift away from New Testament doctrine and liturgy immediately following the death of the apostles. For us, if it is not in the Bible, we don't do it! Tertullian said: "And how long shall we draw the saw to and fro through this line, when we have an ancient practice, which by anticipation has made for us the state, i.e., of the question? **If no passage of Scripture has prescribed it, assuredly custom, which without doubt flowed from tradition, has confirmed it. For how can anything come into use, if it has not first been handed down? Even in pleading tradition, written authority, you say, must be demanded. Let us inquire, therefore, whether tradition, unless it be written, should not be admitted. Certainly we shall say that it ought not to be admitted, if no cases of other practices which, without any written instrument,**

we maintain on the ground of tradition alone, and the countenance thereafter of custom, affords us any precedent. To deal with this matter briefly, I shall begin with baptism. When we are going to enter the water, but a little before, in the presence of the congregation and under the hand of the president, we solemnly profess that we disown the devil, and his pomp, and his angels. Hereupon we are thrice immersed, making a somewhat ampler pledge than the Lord has appointed in the Gospel. Then when we are taken up (as new-born children), we taste first of all a mixture of milk and honey, and from that day we refrain from the daily bath for a whole week. We take also, in congregations before daybreak, and from the hand of none but the presidents, the sacrament of the Eucharist, which the Lord both commanded to be eaten at meal-times, and enjoined to be taken by all alike. As often as the anniversary comes round, we make offerings for the dead as birthday honours. We count fasting or kneeling in worship on the Lord's day to be unlawful. We rejoice in the same privilege also from Easter to Whitsunday. We feel pained should any wine or bread, even though our own, be cast upon the ground. At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon the forehead the sign. If, for these and other such rules, you insist upon having positive Scripture injunction, you will find none. Tradition will be held forth to you as the originator of them, custom as their strengthener, and faith as their observer. That reason will support tradition, and custom, and faith, you will either yourself perceive, or learn from some one who has. (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)

2. Jerome clearly believes that if the church in the entire world agrees on some doctrine or practice, it is as good as having a Bible verse in scripture and a binding command. We strongly disagree. Jerome even knew at the time he said this, that NONE of what he talks about in this passage like "laying on of hands after baptism" and "drinking milk and honey" after baptism, was universally practiced. And no one in the modern Roman Catholic or Orthodox church today does so either! What is most important here, is that the "unwritten customs and laws" that Jerome claims were handed down by the apostles, are all very trivial and optional matters like "standing up in worship on the Lord's day". Any Catholic or Orthodox defender who want to use Jerome as an example of a man who felt "unwritten customs and laws" are as binding as scripture are required to do all the things Jerome here identifies as "unwritten customs and laws". Otherwise they are as hypocritical as they are dishonest. Jerome says: "Don't you know that the laying on of hands after baptism and then the invocation of the Holy Spirit is a custom of the Churches? Do you demand Scripture proof? You may find it in the Acts of the Apostles. And even if it did not rest on the authority of Scripture the consensus of the whole world in this respect would have the force of a command. For many other observances of the Churches, which are due to tradition, have acquired the authority of the written law, as for instance the practice of dipping the head three times in the water, and then, after leaving the water, of tasting mingled milk and honey in representation of infancy; and, again, the practices of standing up in worship on the Lord's day, and ceasing from fasting every Pentecost; and there are many other unwritten practices which have won their place through reason and custom. So you see we follow the practice of the Church, although it may be clear that a person was baptized before the Spirit was invoked." (Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8)

G. Expedient tradition and the Easter wars:

1. The Quartodecimans (14th Day Christians: Nissan 14 & Easter controversies) calculated the date for Passover according to the Law of Moses. Hippolytus was the bishop of Rome and for reasons unknown, came up with an entirely new way of calculating the date for Passover. (Easter) What is so important about this example, is that Hippolytus labeled these men Quartodecimans and called them heretics. Yet the Quartodecimans wanted to "do it the way the Bible says" and maintain the 1700 year old Jewish tradition of calculating Passover on Nissan 14. But the Jewish calculation meant that Passover (Easter) fell on different days of the week and the church at Rome didn't like this and wanted Easter to always fall on a Sunday. So, contrary to scripture and tradition, they eventually outlawed Quartodeciman view with the Nicene creed. Hippolytus implies that the Quartodecimans keep all other "apostolic tradition", except for rejecting how to properly calculate Easter. Now the "Easter controversy" is an example of how man-made doctrine began to infiltrate the church which no one in the first century practiced. Yearly Easter celebrations are found neither in scripture or the apostolic fathers. What we do find in the apostolic fathers, was that every Sunday was a celebration of the resurrection of Christ. "We keep the eighth day [Sunday] with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead" (The Epistle of Barnabas, 100-130 AD, ch 15). So here we have the bishop of Rome, going against both scripture and tradition of the early church. The issue has never been settled because Easter is a man-made holy day. Had scripture revealed it, we would know exactly how to celebrate it. Christ did not tell Christians to remember his birth at Christmas, but his death... and not once a year at Easter, but every Lord's Day, through communion. "Easter", therefore in the early church was a weekly event!
2. And **certain other (heretics)**, contentious by nature, (and) wholly unformed as regards knowledge, as well as in their manner more (than usually) quarrelsome, combine (in maintaining) that **Easter should be kept on the fourteenth day of the first month, according to the commandment of the law, on whatever day (of the week) it should occur.** (But in this) they only regard what has been written in the law, that he will be accursed who does not so keep (the commandment) as it is enjoined. They do not, however, attend to this (fact), that the legal enactment was made for Jews, who in times to come should kill the real Passover. And this (paschal sacrifice, in its efficacy,) has spread unto the Gentiles, and is discerned by faith, and not now observed in letter (merely). They attend to this one commandment, and do not look unto what has been spoken by the apostle: "For I testify to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to keep the whole law." In other respects, however, **these consent to all the traditions delivered to the Church by the Apostles.** (Hippolytus. Refutation of All Heresies, book 8, ch 11, The Quartodecimans).
3. **Easter is a tradition:** Cyprian in 250 AD, says of the Easter controversy: "they who are at Rome **do not observe those things in all cases which are handed down from the beginning, and vainly pretend the authority of the apostles**" (Cyprian, Epistle 74, 6)

The Apostolic Fathers recognized five different kinds of tradition:



[Tradition #1: Scripture.](#) (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)



[Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration.](#) (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)



[Tradition #3: Expedient tradition.](#) (Roman 14:5)



[Tradition #4: Uninspired creeds "Rule of Faith".](#) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)



[Tradition #5: False doctrine tradition.](#) (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5)



[Mistakes made by the Apostolic Fathers based upon tradition](#)

By Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

The Apostolic Fathers believed man-made creeds were tradition based 100% on scripture.

"So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)



Introduction:

The "Rule of faith" (creeds) of the early church was the scripture itself. By 180 AD, oral and written creeds began to come into general use. It is important to note, that these creeds were based 100% on scripture, and 0% on oral tradition. For Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders to refer to these creeds as proof of an oral tradition in the early church, is as unscholarly as it is deluded. Between 180 - 325 AD, there were many different versions of creeds and none universally accepted. In 325 AD, the Nicene Creed became the first creed that was considered universal law and equal to the Bible. Indeed, the authors of the Nicene creed stated that every clause and phrase was based directly upon scripture. As time went on, more creeds and canons

were produced, but they became less dependant upon scripture. Today, every major denomination has followed the error of creedalism, each claiming their creed teaches exactly what the Bible says. The solution is to do away with all creeds including the "apostles creed" and the "Nicene creed". All creeds are dangerous, including the Apostles creed with which we find no error. That is because all creeds, even correct ones, compete with the authority of the Bible.

Tradition #4: Uninspired man-made creeds, "Rule of Faith" (regula fidei) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)

The early church stated that every single thought and phrase of all early creeds were believed to be directly based upon scripture. None of the thoughts and phrases came from "extra-biblical oral tradition".

A. "creed like" statements of Faith in the Bible:

Below are three inspired "creed like" statements like Paul. They are not creeds, and never have been used as creed, but they are Bible examples of how creeds. Notice they are different lengths and relate different details:

1 Corinthians 15:3-6

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep"

1 Timothy 3:16

"By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory."

2 Timothy 2:8

"Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel"

B. Two early man-made creeds (regula fidei) are as follows:

"Rule of faith" (regula fidei) tradition where the Christians made short uninspired summaries of the faith based directly upon the inspired written and oral traditions of the apostles and prophets. These would have the same type of origin, as a sermon outline based upon the scripture. Unfortunately, these creeds began to be looked at as authoritative with Irenaeus (180 AD) and Tertullian (200 AD). By 325 AD, this trend produced the first creed that was viewed with equal authority with the Bible itself: The Nicene creed. These creeds early on, were memorized by sinners before being baptized. Notice that they were originally not written, but represented a verbal tradition based directly upon the words and writings of the inspired apostles.

Irenaeus 180 AD

"believing in one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and all things therein, by means of Christ Jesus, the Son of God; who, because of His surpassing love towards His creation, condescended to be born of the virgin, He Himself uniting man through Himself to God, and having suffered under Pontius Pilate, and rising again, and having been received up in splendour, shall come in glory, the Saviour of those who are saved, and the Judge of those who are judged, and sending into eternal fire those who transform the truth, and despise His Father and His advent." (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, book 3, 4, 1-2)

Tertullian 200 AD

"there is one only God, and that He is none other than the Creator of the world, who produced all things out of nothing through His own Word, first of all sent forth; that this Word is called His Son, *and*, under the name of God, was seen "in diverse manners" by the patriarchs, heard at all times in the prophets, at last brought down by the Spirit and Power of the Father into the Virgin Mary, was made flesh in her womb, and, being born of her, went forth as Jesus Christ; thenceforth He preached the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven, worked miracles; having been crucified, He rose again the third day; (then) having ascended into the heavens, He sat at the right hand of the Father; sent instead of Himself the Power of the Holy Ghost to lead such as believe; will come with glory to take the saints to the enjoyment of everlasting life and of the heavenly promises, and to condemn the wicked to everlasting fire, after the resurrection of both these classes shall have happened, together with the restoration of their flesh." (Tertullian, the Prescription Against Heretics, Chapter XIII)

C. Full texts and further discussion:

1. Irenaeus identifies that both inspired apostolic oral and written tradition are carefully preserved by the churches in succession over time. It is obvious from the passage that scripture is included in this category of "ancient tradition of the apostles". To say it excludes scripture, as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches say it does, and then say the text only discusses oral tradition, is as unwarranted as it is silly. The oral tradition that is identified in the text is in fact a creed (in blue) that is identical to the scriptures. Had this oral tradition contained a key doctrine not found in scripture, then the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches would have a powerful point. Our view of sola Scriptura is reinforced by this passage. What this passage is talking about happens all the time today when we spontaneously and unexpectedly teach a sinner the gospel in a city park when we have no Bible in hand. We rely on "oral tradition" in the absence of written documents. Had Irenaeus' creed (in blue) included any extra biblical doctrines like, the perpetual virginity and assumption of Mary, infant baptism, triple baptism; the sign of the cross etc., then Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders would still only have a weak argument at best. But since there are no extra biblical doctrines, it actually supports our view that all "inspired apostolic tradition" was also contained in scripture. We are not denying "oral apostolic tradition", we merely say it is identical with scripture. Irenaeus said: "1. Since therefore we have such proofs, it is not necessary to seek the truth among others which it is easy to obtain from the Church; since the apostles, like a rich man [depositing his money] in a bank, **lodged in her hands most copiously all things pertaining to the truth**: so that every man, whosoever will, can draw from her the water of

life. For she is the entrance to life; all others are thieves and robbers. On this account are we bound to avoid *them*, but to make choice of the thing pertaining to the Church with the utmost diligence, and **to lay hold of the tradition of the truth**. For how stands the case? Suppose there arise a dispute relative to some important question among us, **should we not have recourse to the most ancient Churches with which the apostles held constant intercourse, and learn from them what is certain and clear in regard to the present question? For how should it be if the apostles themselves had not left us writings?** Would it not be necessary, [in that case,] to follow the course of the **tradition which they handed down** to those to whom they did commit the Churches? 2. To which course many nations of those barbarians who believe in Christ do assent, **having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit, without paper or ink, and, carefully preserving the ancient tradition, believing in one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and all things therein, by means of Christ Jesus, the Son of God; who, because of His surpassing love towards His creation, condescended to be born of the virgin, He Himself uniting man through Himself to God, and having suffered under Pontius Pilate, and rising again, and having been received up in splendour, shall come in glory, the Saviour of those who are saved, and the Judge of those who are judged, and sending into eternal fire those who transform the truth, and despise His Father and His advent. Those who, in the absence of written documents, have believed this faith**, are barbarians, so far as regards our language; but as regards doctrine, manner, and tenor of life, they are, because of faith, very wise indeed; and they do please God, ordering their conversation in all righteousness, chastity, and wisdom. If any one were to preach to these men the inventions of the heretics, speaking to them in their own language, they would at once stop their ears, and flee as far off as possible, not enduring even to listen to the blasphemous address. Thus, by means of **that ancient tradition of the apostles**, they do not suffer their mind to conceive anything of the [doctrines suggested by the] portentous language of these teachers, among whom neither Church nor doctrine has ever been established. (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, book 3, 4, 1-2)

2. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches love to quote (Tertullian, the Prescription Against Heretics, Chapter XIII) as proof that Tertullian had an oral apostolic tradition that was distinct from scripture. We who teach sola Scriptura, actually have no problem agreeing! Tertullian calls this oral tradition, "the rule of faith". We agree that it was a creed, but notice it contains absolutely nothing, except what the scriptures specifically reveal. This would have been a powerful witness for the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches if such a "rule of faith" actually contained doctrinal details not found in scripture like: the perpetual virginity and assumption of Mary; infant baptism; triple baptism; the sign of the cross etc. In fact, Tertullian's "rule of faith" is proof of our major premise, namely, that all such "apostolic traditions" that were considered essential were based entirely (100%) upon scripture. Even in the [Lord's true church today](#), any member at random, if asked from the pulpit, could give a similar "one paragraph summary" of the true faith. Even the apostle Paul gives a similar type of "one paragraph summary" of doctrine in 1 Cor 15:3-8. Of course, we must take issue with Tertullian's "rule of faith" on one key point: While he views this extra-biblical, man-made document authoritative in itself, even if it is directly based upon scripture, the correct approach is to give it no more authority than the many different "one paragraph summaries of faith" each member might give. Tertullian's creed, began a very dangerous trend where eventually, as we see in most denominations today, creeds have actually supplanted and replaced scripture as the

ultimate authority. "Now, with regard to this **rule of faith**-that we may from this point acknowledge what it is which we defend-it is, you must know, that which prescribes the belief that **there is one only God, and that He is none other than the Creator of the world, who produced all things out of nothing through His own Word, first of all sent forth; that this Word is called His Son, and, under the name of God, was seen "in diverse manners" by the patriarchs, heard at all times in the prophets, at last brought down by the Spirit and Power of the Father into the Virgin Mary, was made flesh in her womb, and, being born of her, went forth as Jesus Christ; thenceforth He preached the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven, worked miracles; having been crucified, He rose again the third day; (then) having ascended into the heavens, He sat at the right hand of the Father; sent instead of Himself the Power of the Holy Ghost to lead such as believe; will come with glory to take the saints to the enjoyment of everlasting life and of the heavenly promises, and to condemn the wicked to everlasting fire, after the resurrection of both these classes shall have happened, together with the restoration of their flesh.** This rule, as it will be proved, was taught by Christ, and raises amongst ourselves no other questions than those which heresies introduce, and which make men heretics."
(Tertullian, the Prescription Against Heretics, Chapter XIII)

3. Augustine, like all the fathers, believed that every phrase in the Nicene creed had its origin in the scripture, not some "unwritten oral tradition of the apostles". He calls the creed, "**Rule of Faith**" which was first used by Tertullian in 200 AD. The age of creed making is in full bloom! Today, every major denomination, including the Catholic and Orthodox believe their creeds are based directly upon the Bible. This of course cannot be true since they contradict both one another and the Bible itself! Augustine said: "Receive, my children, **the Rule of Faith, which is called the Symbol (or Creed).** And when ye have received it, write it in your heart, and be daily saying it to yourselves; ... For this is the Creed which ye are to rehearse and to repeat in answer. **These words which ye have heard are in the Divine Scriptures scattered up and down: but thence gathered and reduced into one, that the memory of slow persons might not be distressed; that every person may be able to say, able to hold, what he believes.** For have ye now merely heard that God is Almighty? But ye begin to have him for your father, when ye have been born by the church as your Mother. (Augustine, On the Nicene Creed: a Sermon to the Catechumens, 1)
4. Athanasius states that the scriptures are all-sufficient. He also says that the decisions of the councils were identical with divine scripture, or as Athanasius, "you can't tell one from the other". When you read the Nicene Creed, you wonder if you are reading the Bible! No extra-Biblical tradition here in the mind of Athanasius! "Vainly then do they run about with the pretext that they have demanded Councils for the faith's sake; **for divine Scripture is sufficient above all things;** but if a Council be needed on the point, there are the proceedings of the Fathers, for the **Nicene Bishops did not neglect this matter, but stated the doctrine so exactly,** that persons reading their words honestly, **cannot but be reminded by them of the religion towards Christ, announced in divine Scripture"** (Athanasius, de Synodis, Part 1, 6)
5. "I follow the **laws and rules of the apostles.** I test my teaching by applying to it, like a rule and measure, the **faith laid down by the holy and blessed Fathers at Nicaea.** If any one maintain that I hold any contrary opinion, let him accuse me face to face; let him not slander me in my absence." (Theodoret, letters, 40)

6. **Cyril instructs men to memorize the Nicene creed because it is a summary based directly and solely on scripture itself!** He states, 25 years after the creed was written, exactly what we are saying, namely that these creeds do not represent, "extra-Biblical oral tradition of the apostles" Cyril says "**confirmation out of Holy Scripture of each part of the contents. For the articles of the Faith were not composed as seemed good to men; but the most important points collected out of all the Scripture make up one complete teaching of the Faith**". Cyril applies 2 Thess 2:15, "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word *of mouth* or by letter from us." to the very process of memorizing this creed. It must be most unsettling for Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders to learn that Cyril identifies Tradition as "the scripture". The Nicene creed certainly cannot be used by these defenders as proof of "extra-Biblical oral tradition of the apostles", because Cyril comes right out and tells us that the creed originated directly from scripture, clause by clause! Cyril, views the creed as an exact but condensed replica of scripture! All creed makers, view their creeds as a scripture substitute! Memorizing this creed, which is scripture, is how you "hold fast the traditions" (2 Thess 2:15) this is how you "write them an the table of your heart (2 Cor 3:3). So in the end, we do have an oral tradition here that is written on the heart: Nothing other than what we find in scripture. This must be most unsettling for Catholic and Orthodox apologists who search desperately for some "extra-Biblical oral tradition of the apostles". Cyril says: "But in learning the Faith and in professing it, acquire and keep that only, which is now delivered to thee by the Church, **and which has been built up strongly out of all the Scriptures**. For since all cannot read the Scriptures, some being hindered as to the knowledge of them by want of learning, and others by a want of leisure, in order that the soul may not perish from ignorance, we comprise the whole doctrine of the Faith in a few lines. This summary I wish you both to **commit to memory when I recite it** , and to rehearse it with all diligence among yourselves, not writing it out on paper, but engraving it by the memory upon your heart , taking care while you rehearse it that no Catechumen chance to overhear the things which have been delivered to you. I wish you also to keep this as a provision through the whole course of your life, and beside this to receive no other, neither if we ourselves should change and contradict our present teaching, nor if an adverse angel, *transformed into an angel of light* should wish to lead you astray. *For though we or an angel from heaven preach to you any other gospel than that ye have received, let him be to you anathema* . **So for the present listen while I simply say the Creed, and commit it to memory; but at the proper season expect the confirmation out of Holy Scripture of each part of the contents. For the articles of the Faith were not composed as seemed good to men; but the most important points collected out of all the Scripture make up one complete teaching of the Faith**. And just as the mustard seed in one small grain contains many branches, so also this Faith has embraced in **few words all the knowledge of godliness in the Old and New Testaments**. Take heed then, brethren, and **hold fast the traditions which ye now receive, and write them an the table of your heart**. Guard them with reverence, lest per chance the enemy despoil any who have grown slack; or lest some heretic pervert any of the **truths delivered to you**. (Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lecture 5, 12-13)
7. Notice how Hilary engages in "proof-texting"! After each statement of faith, he refers the reader, not to some human creed, council or the authority of the church, but to the scriptures themselves! He feels that the scriptures, not some creed, are able to "**resists all**

attack" from heretics! He speaks of how his doctrine is "**certified by the full weight of Scripture authority**" and is "**that exact sense in which Scripture declares**". Hilary sure doesn't sound like a Catholic or Orthodox! Why does he not say, "forget what the Bible says" you can't understand it anyway... the church currently teaches..." Hilary says: "This is no unsupported statement of his own, which might lead to error, but a warning to us to confess that Christ died and rose after a real manner, not a nominal, since the fact **is certified by the full weight of Scripture authority**; and that we must understand His death **in that exact sense in which Scripture declares** it. In his regard for the perplexities and scruples of the weak and sensitive believer, he adds these solemn concluding words, *according to the Scriptures*, to his proclamation of the death and the resurrection. He would not have us grow weaker, driven about by every wind of vain doctrine, or vexed by empty subtleties and false doubts: he would summon faith to return, before it were shipwrecked, to the haven of piety, believing and confessing the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Son of Man and Son of God, *according to the Scriptures*, this being the safeguard of reverence against the attack of the adversary, so to understand the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as it was written of Him. There is no danger in faith: the reverent confession of the hidden mystery of God is always safe. Christ was born of the Virgin, but conceived of the Holy Ghost *according to the Scriptures*. Christ wept, but *according to the Scriptures*: that which made Him weep was also a cause of joy. Christ hungered; but *according to the Scriptures*, He used His power as God against the tree which bore no fruit, when He had no loath Christ suffered: but *according to the Scriptures*, He was about to sit at the right hand of Power. He complained that He was abandoned to die: but *according to the Scriptures*, at the same moment He received in His kingdom in Paradise the thief who confessed Him. He died: **but according to the Scriptures**, He rose again and sits at the right hand of God. In the belief of this mystery there is life: **this confession resists all attack.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 10, 67)

The Apostolic Fathers recognized five different kinds of tradition:



[Tradition #1: Scripture.](#) (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)



[Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration.](#) (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)



[Tradition #3: Expedient tradition.](#) (Roman 14:5)



[Tradition #4: Uninspired creeds "Rule of Faith".](#) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)



[Tradition #5: False doctrine tradition.](#) (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5)



[Mistakes made by the Apostolic Fathers based upon tradition](#)

By Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!	Start here	Defending the Bible	Sola Scriptura Debates	Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura
Request FREE Bible study course by Mail	Stumper Questions	All Creeds Dangerous	Traditions Dangerous	Church Illuminated
Information about who we are!	100 AD	Sola Scriptura	Read Bible to Understand	Holy Spirit Illumination
Assembly locations of Christians near you.	27 Book Bible Canon	ProofTexts	SEARCH this local site LINK to this site	
Telephone hotlines in your own home town.				
Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.				

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

The Apostolic Fathers referred to false doctrine as tradition that should not be followed.

"So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us." (2 Thessalonians 2:15)



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

Introduction:

The Apostolic Fathers referred to false doctrine as a tradition that should not be followed. When the Apostolic Fathers stated that the tradition of the Gnostics, for example, differed from the church' tradition, they were not referring to oral tradition, but the set of doctrines that were taught in scripture.

Tradition #5: False doctrine. (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5; Titus 1:14)

Any tradition that contradicted scripture was considered false doctrine. The fathers refer to the heretical "traditions" of the Gnostics, for example, that contradict the inspired, written and oral revelation of the apostles and prophets. The "church fathers" would point out that the Gnostic theology differed from scripture and the Gnostic tradition differed from the church's apostolic tradition. The reference to the tradition of Corbin in Mk 7:11 is particularly applicable to the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches since they have a [large number of human traditions that actually change the revealed law](#) of God in scripture!

A. Scripture references to false doctrine as tradition:

1. 'But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.' "Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the **tradition of men**." He was also saying to them, "You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. "For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who speaks evil of father or mother, is to be put to death'; but you say, 'If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is **Corban** (that is to say, given to God),' you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that." Mark 7:7-13

2. "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the **tradition of men**, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ." Colossians 2:8
3. "preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." 2 Timothy 4:2-5
4. "not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth." Titus 1:14

B. References to false doctrine as tradition by the Fathers:

1. Irenaeus clearly point out that their false teachers tradition differed from the church's tradition. (Against Heresies, Book 3, Ch 3, 2)
2. Cyprian calls the Gnostic doctrine a "**sacrilegious tradition against God long after the apostles**, and after long lapse of time from them." (Cyprian, Epistle 74, 5).
3. Cyprian referred to false doctrines of Pope Stephen as "traditions". Cyprian proves here that he viewed traditions of the church to be acceptable only when they agreed with the Bible and for those "traditions" that contradict scripture Cyprian says, "**custom without truth is the antiquity of error**". Wow! We couldn't have said it better ourselves. (Cyprian, Epistle 73:2,3,8,9, of Pope Stephen's false teaching on baptism) Cyprian also condemns Stephen, the bishop of Rome, for his false teaching on baptism and asks pope Stephen where he got his tradition, then threatens he should be withdrawn from for heresy! Here is an example of where the "Fathers" applied the phrase, "Traditions of men", quoting Mk 7:7-9, to the "church traditions" of the church of Rome.
4. Here we have dietary rules for monks called, "**the ancient tradition of the fathers**". This is a perfect example of how post apostolic man-made rules directly contradict the teaching of the New testament that says the Christian can eat anything he likes, common food or the food of kings, as long as it is accepted with prayer and thanksgiving. 1 Tim 4:1-4 actually calls John Cassian's diet rules, "doctrines of demons ... who advocate abstaining from foods". "For the nature of gluttony is threefold: first, there is that which forces us to anticipate the proper hour for a meal, next that which delights in stuffing the stomach, and gorging all kinds of food; thirdly, that which takes pleasure in more refined and delicate feasting. And so against it a **monk should observe** a threefold watch: first, he should wait till the proper time for breaking the fast; secondly, he should not give way to gorging; thirdly, **he should be contented with any of the commoner sorts of food. For anything that is taken over and above what is customary and the common use of all, is branded by the ancient tradition of the fathers as defiled with the sin of vanity and glorying and ostentation.**" (John Cassian, Book V, Of the Spirit of Gluttony, Ch 23)

The Apostolic Fathers recognized five different kinds of tradition:



[Tradition #1: Scripture.](#) (2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6)



[Tradition #2: Verbal inspiration.](#) (Jer 1:9; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6; 2 Tim 2:2)



[Tradition #3: Expedient tradition.](#) (Roman 14:5)



[Tradition #4: Uninspired creeds "Rule of Faith".](#) (1 Cor 15:3-6; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:8)



[Tradition #5: False doctrine tradition.](#) (Mk 7:7-9; Col 2:8; 2 Tim 4:2-5)



[Mistakes made by the Apostolic Fathers based upon tradition](#)

By Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

180 AD: Clement of Alexandria:

1. "But those who are ready to toil in the most excellent pursuits, will not desist from the search after truth, **till they get the demonstration from the Scriptures themselves.**" (Clement of Alexandria, book 7, ch 16, Scripture the Criterion by Which Truth and Heresy are Distinguished)

What a wonderful anti-Catholic statement Clement makes! Clement will not accept any doctrine, until he can see it is clearly taught in scriptures!

2. "For we have, **as the source of teaching, the Lord, both by the prophets, the Gospel,** and the blessed apostles, "in divers manners and at sundry times," [Heb 1:1] leading from the beginning of knowledge to the end. He, then, who **of himself believes the Scripture** and voice of the Lord, which by the Lord acts to the benefiting of men, is rightly [regarded] faithful." ... "For those are slothful who, having it in their power to provide themselves with proper proofs for the **divine Scriptures from the Scriptures themselves,** select only what contributes to their own pleasures. And those have a craving for glory who voluntarily evade, by arguments of a diverse sort, **the things delivered by the blessed apostles and teachers, which are wedded to inspired words; opposing the divine tradition by human teachings** , in order to establish the heresy"(Clement of Alexandria, book 7, ch 16, Scripture the Criterion by Which Truth and Heresy are Distinguished)

Clement shows the sequence of revelation starting with Jesus, moving through the prophets, then finally ending its journey in the written gospels. Notice that at the end of the process, the Christian, "of himself" (using his own powers of interpretation) believes the scriptures. Notice that Clement calls "slothful" those who do not put the work into interpreting the Bible for themselves! These false teachers just carelessly grab anything they can find to support their doctrines without doing a proper and though study. Again this sounds real "Catholic" or "Orthodox" because they are lazy and want the priest to simply tell them what the Bible says, rather than doing the work and studying the scriptures for themselves!

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- Apostolic Fathers: [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- Apostolic Fathers: [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

200 AD: Tertullian:

1. "From this, therefore, do we draw up our rule. Since **the Lord Jesus Christ sent the apostles to preach**, (our rule is) that no others ought to be received as preachers than those whom Christ appointed; for "no man knoweth the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." Nor does the Son seem to have revealed Him to any other than the apostles, whom He sent forth to preach-that, of course, which He revealed to them. Now, what that was which they preached-in other words, what it was which Christ revealed to them-can, as I must here likewise prescribe, properly be proved in no other way than by **those very churches which the apostles rounded in person**, by declaring the gospel to them directly themselves, both viva voce [living voice], as the phrase is, **and subsequently by their epistles**. If, then, these things are so, **it is in the same degree manifest that all doctrine which agrees with the apostolic churches-those moulds and original sources of the faith must be reckoned for truth**, as undoubtedly containing that which the (said) churches received from the apostles, the apostles from Christ, Christ from God. **Whereas all doctrine must be prejudged as false which savours of contrariety to the truth of the churches and apostles of Christ and God**. It remains, then, that we demonstrate whether this doctrine of ours, of which we have now given the rule, has its origin in the tradition of the apostles, and whether all other *doctrines* do not *ipso facto* proceed from falsehood. **We hold communion with the apostolic churches because our doctrine is in no respect different from theirs**. This is our witness of truth." (Tertullian, The prescription against the heretics, Ch 21)

Tertullian clearly states that their doctrine and practice is identical to what the apostles taught orally and with scripture. Tertullian uses the expression "viva voce" (living voice) which is merely a reference to inspired oral revelation. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches have changed the original meaning of "viva voce" from the words spoken by inspired apostles, to whatever the current practice and dogma of the church is today. Here is proof: "But the appeal to antiquity is both a treason and a heresy. It is a treason because it rejects the **Divine voice of the Church at this hour, and a heresy because it denies that voice to be Divine**. How can we know what antiquity was except through the Church? ... I may say in strict truth that the Church has no antiquity. It rests upon its own supernatural and perpetual consciousness. ... **The only Divine evidence to us of what was primitive is the witness and voice of the Church at this hour**." (Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost: Or Reason and Revelation, 1865, p 227-228) To anyone with an ounce of insight, this statement is not only opposite to what Tertullian means it is utter heresy because it ignores history (Fathers) and scripture. Anyone who has talked to a Roman Catholic or Orthodox preacher, knows this is indeed exactly how they think!

2. If you had not purposely **rejected in some instances, and corrupted in others, the Scriptures** which are opposed to your opinion, you would have been confuted in this matter by the Gospel of John, when it declares that the Spirit descended in the body of a dove, and sat upon the Lord. (Tertullian, The Flesh of Christ, ch 3)

Tertullian appeals to scriptures as his primary and foremost doctrinal standard with no mention of oral tradition. Roman Catholic and Orthodox leaders today merely say, "the current tradition of the church is the standard." Further, These leaders don't even believe

the scriptures can be understood by the common people so obviously they would feel Tertullian was wasting his time even arguing scripture with the Gnostics.

3. "But there is no evidence of this, **because Scripture says nothing.**" ... "The **Scripture says nothing of this**, although it is not in other instances silent" ... "I do not admit what you advance of your own **apart from Scripture.**" (Tertullian, The Flesh of Christ, ch 6; ch 7)

In refuting the Gnostics, Tertullian appeals to the silence of scripture as proof they are wrong. Whereas Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches today openly preach we must practice many things not revealed in scripture, Tertullian says otherwise. Tertullian therefore, not only shows we must not "exceed what is written" but that scripture itself is the all-sufficient standard. It is also noteworthy that when the Gnostics were actually making appeals to their own "oral traditions", Tertullian initially fought back, not by saying that church tradition was silent, but that the scriptures taught no such doctrine. The Gnostics argued with oral tradition and Tertullian refuted with scripture! We agree and do the same today in fighting the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches! We fight their tradition with scripture just like Tertullian did!

4. "But to what shifts you resort, in your attempt to rob the syllable *ex* (Indicating the *material* or *ingredient*, "out of.") of its proper force as a preposition, and to **substitute another for it in a sense not found throughout the Holy Scriptures!** (Tertullian, The Flesh of Christ, ch 20)


Tertullian appeals to the private interpretation of a preposition of a word found in scripture. In a most "un-Roman catholic" way, he expects the Gnostics to possess the ability to be able to both understand and properly interpret this, even as heretics! Obviously Tertullian believed that the scripture was understandable, by merely reading it. Paul stated as much in Eph 3:3-5, "When you read you can have my same level of understanding of the mystery of Christ."

5. "We have, however, challenged these opinions to the test, both of the arguments which sustain them, **and of the Scriptures which are appealed** to, and this we have done *ex abundantia*; so that we have, by showing what the flesh of Christ was" (Tertullian, The Flesh of Christ, ch 25)

Tertullian says that he "abundantly" appealed to scripture to refute the heretics. Orthodox are surprised by this and would have expected Tertullian to merely say, "its not what our current church tradition is".

6. "And how long shall we draw the saw to and fro through this line, when we have an ancient practice, which by anticipation has made for us the state, i.e., of the question? **If no passage of Scripture has prescribed it, assuredly custom, which without doubt flowed from tradition, has confirmed it. For how can anything come into use, if it has not first been handed down? Even in pleading tradition, written authority, you say, must be demanded. Let us inquire, therefore, whether tradition, unless it be written, should not be admitted. Certainly we shall say that it ought not to be admitted, if no cases of other practices which, without any written instrument, we maintain on the ground of tradition alone, and the countenance thereafter of custom, affords us any precedent. To deal with this matter briefly, I shall begin with baptism. When we are going to enter the water, but a little before, in the presence of the congregation and under the hand of the president, we**

solemnly profess that we disown the devil, and his pomp, and his angels. Hereupon we are thrice immersed, making a somewhat ampler pledge than the Lord has appointed in the Gospel. Then when we are taken up (as new-born children), we taste first of all a mixture of milk and honey, and from that day we refrain from the daily bath for a whole week. We take also, in congregations before daybreak, and from the hand of none but the presidents, the sacrament of the Eucharist, which the Lord both commanded to be eaten at meal-times, and enjoined to be taken by all alike. As often as the anniversary comes round, we make offerings for the dead as birthday honours. We count fasting or kneeling in worship on the Lord's day to be unlawful. We rejoice in the same privilege also from Easter to Whitsunday. We feel pained should any wine or bread, even though our own, be cast upon the ground. At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of daily life, we trace upon the forehead the sign. If, for these and other such rules, you insist upon having positive Scripture injunction, you will find none. Tradition will be held forth to you as the originator of them, custom as their strengthener, and faith as their observer. That reason will support tradition, and custom, and faith, you will either yourself perceive, or learn from some one who has. (Tertullian, The crown or De Corona, ch 3-4)



We love this statement by Tertullian because it proves our point that he used the Bible only to determine doctrine to the exclusion of oral tradition. Now we are actually shocked that Roman Catholic and Orthodox apologists would ever want to refer to this text because it utterly refutes their claim that there is an oral tradition with doctrines that are distinct from, and missing from scripture! If these anti-sola Scriptura advocates are correct, that we must follow, as Tertullian did, "tradition" then why do neither the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches say as a matter of liturgy before they are baptized: "solemnly profess that we disown the devil". Why do Orthodox immerse three times ... just as Tertullian says you should do in tradition, "thrice immersed" yet the Catholics reject this tradition and sprinkle once? After being baptized, why do both the Catholic and Orthodox churches disobey "Tertullian's apostolic tradition" by not "a mixture of milk and honey, and from that day we refrain from the daily bath for a whole week"? In fact they all disobey this apostolic tradition and take a bath as soon as they get home after being baptized! What heresy! Of course, the liturgy of "triple baptism" is not taught in scripture any more than drinking milk/honey and not bathing for a week. These represent localized customs that are expedient. All churches have localized customs and they vary, from congregation to congregation. Remember, there are three kinds of tradition that the apostolic fathers refer to. This is the second type of tradition that is optional because it involves human origin choices that God cares nothing about. Like Tertullian said, "we trace upon the forehead the sign. If, for these and other such rules, you insist upon having positive Scripture injunction, you will find none". That's because it is optional for local churches and individual Christians to do. Indeed, even the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches do not make the "sign of the cross on the forehead" as was the "apostolic tradition", rather they changed the "apostolic tradition" and started making the sign of the cross on the chest! It is these expedient things that are "tradition" and clearly optional that scripture is silent about. Other examples of tradition in this same category today, might be making sure the temperature of the water in the baptistery is exactly 77 degrees;

holding the person being baptized under water for exactly three second, one for the Father, one for the Son and one for the Holy Spirit. So this very passage by Tertullian that Roman Catholic and Orthodox anti-sola Scriptura advocates quote to disprove sola Scriptura, in fact refutes them! This passage also clearly shows the category of "tradition" that all the "Apostolic Fathers" viewed was not found in scripture. Unlike "classical reformers" like Keith A. Matheson, who stated in his book, "The shape of sola Scriptura", that it is important to maintain the oral traditions of the post-apostolic church, we reject this completely because there was a clear and steady drift away from New Testament doctrine and liturgy immediately following the death of the apostles. For us, if it is not in the Bible, we don't do it!

7. "Now, with regard to this **rule of faith**-that we may from this point acknowledge what it is which we defend-it is, you must know, that which prescribes the belief that **there is one only God, and that He is none other than the Creator of the world, who produced all things out of nothing through His own Word, first of all sent forth; that this Word is called His Son, and, under the name of God, was seen "in diverse manners" by the patriarchs, heard at all times in the prophets, at last brought down by the Spirit and Power of the Father into the Virgin Mary, was made flesh in her womb, and, being born of her, went forth as Jesus Christ; thenceforth He preached the new law and the new promise of the kingdom of heaven, worked miracles; having been crucified, He rose again the third day; (then) having ascended into the heavens, He sat at the right hand of the Father; sent instead of Himself the Power of the Holy Ghost to lead such as believe; will come with glory to take the saints to the enjoyment of everlasting life and of the heavenly promises, and to condemn the wicked to everlasting fire, after the resurrection of both these classes shall have happened, together with the restoration of their flesh.** This rule, as it will be proved, was taught by Christ, and raises amongst ourselves no other questions than those which heresies introduce, and which make men heretics." (Tertullian, the Prescription Against Heretics, Chapter XIII)

The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches love to quote (Tertullian, the Prescription Against Heretics, Chapter XIII) as proof that Tertullian had an oral apostolic tradition that was distinct from scripture. We who teach sola Scriptura, actually have no problem agreeing! Tertullian calls this oral tradition, "the rule of faith". We agree that it was a creed, but notice it contains absolutely nothing, except what the scriptures specifically reveal. This would have been a powerful witness for the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches if such a "rule of faith" actually contained doctrinal details not found in scripture like: the perpetual virginity and assumption of Mary; infant baptism; triple baptism; the sign of the cross etc. In fact, Tertullian's "rule of faith" is proof of our major premise, namely, that all such "apostolic traditions" that were considered essential were based entirely (100%) upon scripture. Even in the [Lord's true church today](#), any member at random, if asked from the pulpit, could give a similar "one paragraph summary" of the true faith. Even the apostle Paul gives a similar type of "one paragraph summary" of doctrine in 1 Cor 15:3-8. Of course, we must take issue with Tertullian's "rule of faith" on one key point: While he views this extra-biblical, man-made document authoritative in itself, even if it is directly based upon scripture, the correct approach is to give it no more authority than the many different "one paragraph summaries of faith" each member might give. Tertullian's creed, began a very dangerous trend where eventually, as we see in

most denominations today, creeds have actually supplanted and replaced scripture as the ultimate authority.

8. ""With whom lies that very **faith to which the Scriptures belong**. From what and through whom, and when, and to whom, **has been handed down that rule**, by which men become Christians?" For wherever it shall be manifest that the true **Christian rule and faith** shall be, **there will likewise be the true Scriptures and expositions thereof, and all the Christian traditions**. (Tertullian, The prescription against the heretics, Ch 19)

It is clear that Tertullian accepts the creed, which he calls "the rule of faith" as an extra-biblical witness to truth. But it is also clear, from what he wrote in (Tertullian, the Prescription Against Heretics, Chapter XIII, see above in blue) that this creed contained nothing distinct from what the scriptures teach.

9. "Silence! Silence on such blasphemy. Let us be content with saying that Christ died, the Son of the Father; **and let this suffice, because the Scriptures have told us so much**. For even the apostle, to his declaration-which he makes not without feeling the weight of it-that "Christ died," immediately adds, "**according to the Scriptures**," in order that he may alleviate the harshness of the statement **by the authority of the Scriptures**, and so remove offence from the reader." (Tertullian, Against Praxeas, ch 29)

Tertullian takes the view that if the scriptures speak on a subject, it is the only authority needed.

10. What, therefore, **did not exist, the Scripture** [Gnostic false doctrine] was unable to mention; and by not mentioning it, it has given us a clear proof that there was no such thing: for if there had been, the Scripture would have mentioned it. (Tertullian, Against Hermogenes, ch 20)

Tertullian makes the profound statement that the Gnostics are wrong because scripture doesn't teach their doctrine. If there existed a separate channel of doctrinal authority, as the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches say exists, the Gnostics would have countered Tertullian by saying, "That's a silly argument Tertullian, because you know there are all kinds of doctrines the church teaches that are not found in the scripture, but are considered true, because they are "oral apostolic tradition". We do not deny oral apostolic tradition was considered authoritative in the early church, just that it never differed in any way from what was in scripture. The both the church and the Gnostics understood this and that is why Tertullian refutes them based upon the silence of scripture.

11. **I revere the fulness of His Scripture**, in which He manifests to me both the Creator and the creation. In the gospel, moreover, I discover a Minister and Witness of the Creator, even His Word. But whether all things were made out of any underlying Matter, I have as yet failed anywhere to find. Where such a statement is written, Hermogenes' shop must tell us. **If it is nowhere written, then let it fear the woe which impends on all who add to or take away from the written word**. (Tertullian, Against Hermogenes, ch 22)

Tertullian first claims scripture is all-sufficient and then argues that if the Gnostic doctrines are not in scripture, then they are false.

12. "Suppose now I should say the city built a theatre and a circus, but the stage ... But this example may be an idle one as being derived from a human circumstance; I will take another, **which has the authority of Scripture itself**. It says that "God made man of the dust of the ground"" (Tertullian, Against Hermogenes, ch 31)

After using an argument based upon every day life, Tertullian then underscores that this next argument is authoritative because it comes from scripture. This shows that that non-biblical opinions by church leaders should not be considered authoritative. Of course today, bishops and priests demand obedience even when they do not quote scripture by calling it tradition.

by Steve Rudd

The screenshot shows the homepage of the website "Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone". The title is written in a red, cursive font at the top. Below the title, there is a navigation menu with the text "CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE". The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Left Sidebar:**
 - Go To Truth (with a dove icon)
 - Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer! (with a lightbulb icon)
 - Request FREE Bible study course by Mail (with an envelope icon)
 - Information about who we are! (with an information icon)
 - Assembly locations of Christians near you. (with a church icon)
 - Telephone hotlines in your own home town. (with a telephone icon)
 - Contact E-mail study partner nearest you. (with a lightning bolt icon)
- Main Content Area:**
 - Start here (with a speaker icon)
 - Defending the Bible (with a book and sword icon)
 - Sola Scriptura Debates (with two figures icon)
 - Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura (with a man's head icon)
 - Stumper Questions (with a book and question mark icon)
 - All Creeds Dangerous (with a book and fire icon)
 - Traditions Dangerous (with a Santa Claus icon)
 - Church Illuminated (with a church icon)
 - 100 AD Bible Canon (with a scroll icon)
 - Sola Scriptura ProofTexts (with a book icon)
 - Read Bible to Understand (with a man and woman reading icon)
 - Holy Spirit Illumination (with a man's head icon)
- Bottom Bar:**
 - SEARCH this local site
 - LINK to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

● **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)

● **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

200 AD: Hippolytus:

1. "There is, brethren, one God, **the knowledge of whom we gain from the Holy Scriptures, and from no other source.** For just as a man, if he wishes to be skilled in the wisdom of this world, will find himself unable to get at it in any other way than by mastering the **dogmas of philosophers,** so all of us who wish to practice piety will be unable to learn its practice from **any other quarter than the oracles of God. Whatever things, then, the Holy Scripture declare, at these let us look; and whatsoever things they teach, these let us learn;** and as the Father wills our belief to be, let us believe; and as He wills the Son to be glorified, let us glorify Him; and as He wills the Holy Spirit to be bestowed, let us receive Him. Not according to our own will, nor according to our own mind, nor yet as using violently those things which are given by God, **but even as He has chosen to teach them by the Holy Scriptures, so let us discern them.**" (Hippolytus, Against Noetus, ch 9)

This is a powerful contradiction and refutation to the modern Roman Catholic and Orthodox view of tradition. Although Hippolytus was fully aware that the gospel was first preached 100% orally through the apostles and prophets even before the first book of the New Testament was written, in 200 AD, he recognized that scripture was the only source of authority. This also proves that although Hippolytus may also have recognized the witness of church tradition, he saw that tradition was ultimately derived from scripture, since none of the inspired apostles were alive to consult with.

2. And **certain other (heretics),** contentious by nature, (and) wholly uniformed as regards knowledge, as well as in their manner more (than usually) quarrelsome, combine (in maintaining) that **Easter should be kept on the fourteenth day of the first month, according to the commandment of the law, on whatever day (of the week) it should occur.** (But in this) they only regard what has been written in the law, that he will be accursed who does not so keep (the commandment) as it is enjoined. They do not, however, attend to this (fact), that the legal enactment was made for Jews, who in times

to come should kill the real Passover. And this (paschal sacrifice, in its efficacy,) has spread unto the Gentiles, and is discerned by faith, and not now observed in letter (merely). They attend to this one commandment, and do not look unto what has been spoken by the apostle: "For I testify to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to keep the whole law." In other respects, however, **these consent to all the traditions delivered to the Church by the Apostles.** (Hippolytus. Refutation of All Heresies, book 8, ch 11, The Quartodecimans).

The Quartodecimans (14th Day Christians: Nissan 14 & Easter controversies) calculated the date for Passover according to the Law of Moses. Hippolytus was the bishop of Rome and for reasons unknown, came up with an entirely new way of calculating the date for Passover. (Easter) What is so important about this example, is that Hippolytus labeled these men Quartodecimans and called them heretics. Yet the Quartodecimans wanted to "do it the way the Bible says" and maintain the 1700 year old Jewish tradition of calculating Passover on Nissan 14. But the Jewish calculation meant that Passover (Easter) fell on different days of the week and the church at Rome didn't like this and wanted Easter to always fall on a Sunday. So, contrary to scripture and tradition, they eventually outlawed Quartodeciman view with the Nicene creed. Hippolytus implies that the Quartodecimans keep all other "apostolic tradition", except for rejecting how to properly calculate Easter. Now the "Easter controversy" is an example of how man-made doctrine began to infiltrate the church which no one in the first century practiced. Yearly Easter celebrations are found neither in scripture or the apostolic fathers. What we do find in the apostolic fathers, was that every Sunday was a celebration of the resurrection of Christ. "We keep the eighth day [Sunday] with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead" (The Epistle of Barnabas, 100-130 AD, ch 15). So here we have the bishop of Rome, going against both scripture and tradition of the early church. The issue has never been settled because Easter is a man-made holy day. Had scripture revealed it, we would know exactly how to celebrate it. Christ did not tell Christians to remember his birth at Christmas, but his death... and not once a year at Easter, but every Lord's Day, through communion. "Easter", therefore in the early church was a weekly event! Cyprian in 250 AD, says of the Easter controversy: "they who are at Rome **do not observe those things in all cases which are handed down from the beginning, and vainly pretend the authority of the apostles**" (Cyprian, Epistle 74, 6) This is very bad news for the Roman Catholics who claim unbroken apostolic authority back to the first century!

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- Apostolic Fathers: [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- Apostolic Fathers: [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

250 AD: Cyprian:

1. "But that **they who are at Rome do not observe those things in all cases which are handed down from the beginning, and vainly pretend the authority of the apostles**; any one may know also from the fact, that **concerning the celebration of Easter**, and concerning many other sacraments of divine matters, he may see that **there are some diversities among them**, and that all things are not observed among them alike, which are observed at Jerusalem, just as in very many other provinces also many things are varied because of the difference of the places and names"(Cyprian, Epistle 74, 6)

The Orthodox Church relishes this little anti-Roman Catholic text by Cyprian. But the text provides just as many problems for the Orthodox because it proves that the celebration of Easter began well after 100 AD, since at 250 AD the practice was all over the map. Had there been a true "apostolic tradition" these variations and differences would not exist! The issue has never been settled because Easter is a man-made holy day that developed long after the apostles died. Had scripture revealed it, we would know exactly how to celebrate it. Christ did not tell Christians to remember his birth at Christmas, but his death... and not once a year at Easter, but every Lord's Day, through communion. "Easter", therefore in the early church was a weekly event! [The earliest apostolic fathers considered Sunday the weekly celebration of the Resurrection](#) and the Lord's Supper the weekly remembrance of His death.

2. "2. Let nothing be innovated, says he, **nothing maintained, except what has been handed down. Whence is that tradition?** Whether does it descend from **the authority of the Lord and of the Gospel, or does it come from the commands and the epistles of the apostles?** For that **those things which are written must be done**, God witnesses and admonishes, saying to Joshua the son of Nun: 'The book of this law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate in it day and night, that thou mayest observe to **do according to all that is written therein.**'" ... "3. what obstinacy is that, or what presumption, **to prefer human tradition to divine ordinance**, and not to observe that God is indignant and angry as often as **human tradition relaxes and passes by the divine precepts**, as He cries out, and says by Isaiah the prophet, "This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching the doctrines and commandments of men." Also the Lord in the Gospel, similarly rebuking and reproofing, utters and says, "**Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.**" Mindful of which precept, the blessed Apostle Paul himself also warns and instructs, saying, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to His doctrine, he is proud, knowing nothing: from such withdraw thyself." ... "8. Deservedly thus do heresies and schisms arise day by day, more frequently and more fruitfully grow up, and with serpents' locks shoot forth and cast out against the Church of God with greater force the poison of their venom; whilst, by the advocacy of some, both authority and support are afforded them; **whilst their baptism is defended, whilst faith, whilst truth, is betrayed; whilst that which is done without against the Church is defended within in the very Church itself.**" ... "9. "**Nor ought** custom, which had crept in among some, to prevent the truth from prevailing and conquering; **for custom without truth is the antiquity of error.** On which account, let us forsake the error and follow the truth" (Cyprian, Epistle 73:2,3,8,9, of Pope Stephen's false teaching on baptism)

Cyprian demands that the bishop of Rome follows scripture when it contradicts church

tradition. Cyprian condemns Pope Stephen, for his false teaching on baptism and asks Stephen where he got his tradition, then threatens he should be withdrawn from for heresy! The Catholic church today would reply, "whatever we do IS the correct tradition, we are the standard, those who disagree with us are the heretics." Of course, Cyprian was no rookie, being the Bishop of Carthage! Cyprian begins by defining 4 sources of what had been "handed down": 1. Oral words of Christ. 2. The four gospels (Scripture) which record the words of Christ. 3. Oral words of the apostles. 4. The epistles (Scripture) that record the words of the apostles. He concluded by saying these four sources are all contained in scripture. Cyprian clearly states that there is nothing that Christ or the apostles said regarding our faith, that is not recorded in scripture. For Cyprian, scripture is the all sufficient standard. Most important here, is that Cyprian clearly did not accept "church tradition" unless it agreed with scripture! We completely agree with Cyprian for labeling all the extra-biblical doctrines as "man-made traditions of men". Cyprian proves here that he viewed traditions of the church to be acceptable only when they agreed with the Bible and for those "traditions" that contradict scripture Cyprian says, "**custom without truth is the antiquity of error**". Wow! We couldn't have said it better ourselves!

3. "How carefully has Stephen fulfilled these salutary commands and warnings of the apostle, keeping in the first place lowliness of mind and meekness! For what is more lowly or meek than to have **disagreed with so many bishops throughout the whole world**, breaking peace with each one of them in various kinds of discord: at one time with the eastern churches, as we are sure you know; at another time with you who are in the south" (Cyprian, Epistle 74, 5, 256 AD, of Pope Stephen's false teaching on baptism)

What we find here, is that Pope Stephen was clearly the one who was acting contrary to the universal practice of the whole church at this time. While this provides confidence for the Orthodox church against the Roman Catholic, in their claim to rule the world, we point out to both, that [the Bible pattern for church government was a plurality of Bishops](#) (also called interchangeably: Presbyters) within each local church and their rule was restricted to the local flock with no central, world government. Further, it is clear that Cyprian believed all bishops were equal: "**For neither does any of us set himself up as a bishop of bishops**, nor by tyrannical terror does any compel his colleague to the necessity of obedience; **since every bishop, according to the allowance of his liberty and power, has his own proper right of judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he himself can judge another.**" (The Seventh Council of Carthage Under Cyprian, The Judgment of Eighty-Seven Bishops on the Baptism of Heretics, 250 AD) Even the Orthodox Church rejects what Cyprian says here. Yes Cyprian was opposed to the [next stage of evolution of church government](#) (diocesan bishops) while unaware that he, himself was upholding a system of government that was itself a violation of the Bible pattern. Such is the blindness of church leaders all down through history! Cyprian mistakenly believed that this "church tradition", was in fact the "apostolic tradition".

4. "There is then no reason, dearest brother, for any one to think that **the custom of certain persons is to be followed**, who have thought in thee past **that water alone should be offered in the cup of the Lord**. For we must **inquire whom they themselves have followed. For if in the sacrifice which Christ offered none** is to be followed but Christ, assuredly it behoves us to obey and do that which Christ did, and what He commanded to be done, since He Himself says in the Gospel, "If ye do whatsoever I command you,

henceforth I call you not servants, but friends." And that Christ alone ought to be heard, the Father also testifies from heaven, saying, "This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." Wherefore, if Christ alone must be heard, we ought not to give heed to what another before us may have I thought was to be done, but what Christ, who is before all, first did. Neither is it becoming to **follow the practice of man**, but the truth of God; since God speaks by Isaiah the prophet, and says, "In vain do they worship me, **teaching the commandments and doctrines of men.**" And **again the Lord in the Gospel** repeals this same saying, and says, "Ye reject the **commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.**" Moreover, in another place He establishes it, saying, "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." But if we may not break even the least of the Lord's commandments, how much rather is it forbidden to infringe such important ones, so great, so pertaining to the very sacrament of our Lord's passion and our own redemption, or **to change it by human tradition into anything else than what was divinely appointed!** (Cyprian, Epistle 62, 14)

Cyprian, in refuting those who used water alone in the "cup" of the Lord's Supper, instead of "fruit of the vine" does not appeal to church tradition, but to scripture. He challenges these "human traditions" not with the "churches tradition" but with that which is divinely appointed: Scripture. No appeal is made to oral tradition of Jesus apart from the scriptures.

5. "For it weighs me down and saddens me, and the intolerable grief of a smitten, almost prostrate, spirit seizes me, when I find that you there, contrary to **ecclesiastical order, contrary to evangelical law, contrary to the unity of the Catholic institution, had consented that another bishop should be made.** That is what is **neither right nor allowable to be done; that another church should be set up;** that Christ's members should be torn asunder; that the one mind and body of the Lord's flock should be lacerated by a divided emulation. I entreat that in you, at all events, that unlawful rending of our brotherhood may not continue; but remembering both your confession **and the divine tradition**, you may return to the Mother whence you have gone forth; whence you came to the glory of confession with the rejoicing of the same Mother. And think not that you are thus maintaining the Gospel of Christ when you separate yourselves from the flock of Christ. (Cyprian, Epistle 43)

If a Roman Catholic uses this passage of Cyprian to prove "church traditions" should be kept, he is either ignorant of the context or dishonest. Obviously Cyprian had no concept of the bishop of Rome being the infallible interpreter of Scripture being the "bishop of bishops"! Cyprian does not believe the bishop of Rome has the authority to appoint a bishop and he criticizes Maximus and Nicostratus for going along with Rome! Cyprian says in another place: "**For neither does any of us set himself up as a bishop of bishops, nor by tyrannical terror does any compel his colleague to the necessity of obedience; since every bishop, according to the allowance of his liberty and power, has his own proper right of judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he himself can judge another.**" (The Seventh Council of Carthage Under Cyprian, The Judgment of Eighty-Seven Bishops on the Baptism of Heretics, 250 AD) He calls Rome's action of appointing a new bishop, "**contrary to ecclesiastical order, contrary to evangelical law,**

contrary to the unity of the Catholic institution". Such a statement directed at the Pope would make any Roman Catholic fall off his chair. The Eastern Greek Orthodox church, on the other hand, are actually in complete agreement! The record of history clearly proves that Rome's claim to being the Universal Bishop who appoints all other bishops, did [not exist at this early time in history](#). (250 AD) That is because what Cyprian is opposing is the concept of "diocesan bishops", where one bishop is over other bishops. The later concept of the Patriarchs that developed in 381 AD, must have made Cyprian roll over in his grave! What is clear here, is that Cyprian believes the "**ecclesiastical order**" and "**evangelical law**" is a "**divine tradition**". We would say the same of the bishops who are appointed [in our local churches](#). And if a bishop from one of our local churches tried to rule over other bishops outside his congregation (diocesan bishop), we, like Cyprian, would condemn it as a violation of the "**ecclesiastical order**" and "**evangelical law**" is a "**divine tradition**" found in scripture! We would have no problem saying, it is "**contrary to the unity of the Catholic institution**" of Jesus Christ! What is amazing here, is that Cyprian, in 250 AD, views a single bishop ruling over the presbytery as "divine tradition" while condemning the order of [diocesan bishops](#) as "**contrary to ecclesiastical order**." Cyprian opposed diocesan bishops, while unaware that the present order of church government was itself a violation of the Bible pattern. Click here to learn the [Bible Pattern of government](#). Roman Catholic or Orthodox apologists are willing to dissolve the authority of all diocesan bishops before they attempt to ever "use Cyprian" as an example of "apostolic tradition" apart from the Bible.

6. "in conformity with the requirements alike of the sanctity and **the truth of the divine tradition and ecclesiastical institution**, we have directed our letters to you. Moreover, bringing these same things to the notice of our several colleagues throughout the province, we have bidden also that our brethren, with letters from them, be directed to you" (Cyprian, Epistle 41, 1). "The point is whether, according to the **most ancient custom and ecclesiastical tradition**, it would suffice, after that baptism which they have received outside the Church indeed, but still in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" (Cyprian, Treatise on Rebaptism, 1).

Cyprian believes the current practice is the same as in the first century. What did you expect him to say? But he would also say these traditions are based upon the Bible and if they contradict scripture they are wrong.

7. "For because a **few rash and wicked men forsake the heavenly and wholesome ways of the Lord**, and not doing holy things are deserted by the Holy Spirit, we also ought not therefore to be **unmindful of the divine tradition**, so as to think that the crimes of madmen are greater than the judgments of priests; or conceive that human endeavours can do more to attack, than divine protection avails to defend" (Cyprian, Epistle 54, 17).

We have already seen in (Cyprian, Epistle 73:2,3,8,9) that he views "divine tradition" to be recorded in scripture. There is no reason so believe this is anything different from scripture.

8. "when even Marcion the disciple of Cerdo is found to have introduced his **sacrilegious tradition against God long after the apostles**, and after long lapse of time from them." (Cyprian, Epistle 74, 5).

The false doctrine of the Gnosies is called a "**sacrilegious tradition**" because it contradicts what God revealed through the apostles. The apostles revealed scripture!

9. "If we return to the **head and source of divine tradition, human error ceases.**"(Cyprian, Epistle 73, 10)

We love this statement! In the midst of all the conflicting oral traditions, Cyprian knows that Scripture is the only solid ground. What else could it possibly be? Cyprian could not rely on "church tradition" because they were in conflict with each other!

by Steve Rudd

The image shows a screenshot of a website titled "Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone". The website has a grey background with a white border. At the top left, there is a logo with a dove and the text "Go To Truth". Below the logo, there is a section titled "CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE" with several icons and text links. The links include: "Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!", "Request FREE Bible study course by Mail", "Information about who we are!", "Assembly locations of Christians near you.", "Telephone hotlines in your own home town.", and "Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.". The main content area features a grid of icons and text links: "Start here", "Defending the Bible", "Sola Scriptura Debates", "Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura", "Stumper Questions", "All Creeds Dangerous", "Traditions Dangerous", "Church Illuminated", "100 AD", "Sola Scriptura", "27 Book Bible Canon", "Proof Texts", "Read Bible to Understand", and "Holy Spirit Illumination". At the bottom, there are two red buttons: "SEARCH this local site" and "LINK to this site".

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

325 AD: Athanasius:

1. "the sacred and inspired Scriptures are **sufficient to declare the truth**" (Athanasius, Against the Heathen, part 1, 1, 3)

Athanasius states that in defending doctrine, the scriptures are all-sufficient! In the Arian theological wars, Athanasius uses scripture not tradition as a first line of attack!

2. "Now one might write at great length concerning these things, if one desired to go rate details respecting them; for the impiety and **perverseness of heresies** will appear to be manifold and various, and the craft of the deceivers to be very terrible. But **since holy Scripture is of all things most sufficient for us, therefore recommending to those who desire to know more of these matters, to read the Divine word**, I now hasten to set before you that which most claims attention, and for the sake of which principally I have written these things." (Athanasius, To the Bishops of Egypt, Ch 1, 4)

You will see a pattern with Athanasius, in that he states scripture as being all-sufficient to teach the truth. No appeal is made to tradition.

3. "Vainly then do they run about with the pretext that they have demanded Councils for the faith's sake; **for divine Scripture is sufficient above all things**; but if a Council be needed on the point, there are the proceedings of the Fathers, for the **Nicene Bishops did not neglect this matter, but stated the doctrine so exactly**, that persons reading their words honestly, **cannot but be reminded by them of the religion towards Christ, announced in divine Scripture**" (Athanasius, de Synodis, Part 1, 6)

Athanasius states that the scriptures are all-sufficient. He also says that the decisions of the councils were identical with divine scripture, or as Athanasius, "you can't tell one from the other". When you read the Nicene Creed, you wonder if you are reading the Bible! No extra-Biblical tradition here in the mind of Athanasius!

4. "Such then, as we have above described, is the madness and daring of those men. **But our faith is right, and starts from the teaching of the Apostles and tradition of the fathers,**

being confirmed both by the New Testament and the Old. For the Prophets say: 'Send out Thy Word and Thy Truth,' and ' Behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which is being interpreted God with us.' But what does that mean, if not that God has come in the Flesh? **While the Apostolic tradition teaches in the words of blessed Peter...** [Athanasius then quotes: 1 Peter 4:1; Titus 2:13; Heb 2:1] (Athanasius, To Adelphius, Letter 60, 6)

Athanasius clearly refers to the "**tradition of the fathers**", which he views as an oral tradition distinct from scripture. However, look at what he says about this tradition! It is confirmed by scripture. Then notice that "**Apostolic tradition**" is scripture itself, when he quotes Peter (1 Peter 4:1) and Paul (Titus 2:13). Notice that the expression, "**words of blessed Peter**" might be seen as some oral tradition, but it just the plain Good old Bible Athanasius is referring to!

5. "This is no **Ecclesiastical Canon**; nor have we had **transmitted to us any such tradition from the Fathers**, who in **their turn received from the great and blessed Apostle Peter ...** but where only the fear of God and the **Apostolical rule shall prevail**; that so in the first place, **the faith of the Church may be secure, as the Fathers defined it in the Council of Nicaea** (Athanasius, History of the Arians, Part 5, 36)

Athanasius has already stated that "Ecclesiastical Canons" "tradition from the Fathers" "Apostolical rule" were based directly upon scripture. We do not question that Athanasius took the view that there was a tradition based upon succession of bishops in all the hundreds of churches. We simply point out that until the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches can point out a single place where Athanasius or any early writer tells us: "This is a doctrine not found in scripture, because the Bible is not all-sufficient... this doctrine came directly from the extra-biblical oral tradition of the apostles." Until that time, we see Athanasius doing exactly what all churches today should do: Base their "church traditions" directly on scripture. We think Athanasius is a good example in this regard! Athanasius doesn't help the Roman Catholic and Orthodox apologists prove their point! Now remember, it is futile for the Catholic and Orthodox apologists to point out the fact that Athanasius believed a lot of doctrines in 325 AD that are not found in the Bible. (We would ask them for a list of such doctrines.) The point is that Athanasius never pointed to any of these doctrines and said, "This didn't come from scripture, but oral tradition of the apostles. Indeed, because Athanasius believed ALL HIS DOCTRINE, even the one's he was wrong about, came directly from scripture!

6. "For where is there a Canon that a Bishop should be appointed from Court? Where is there a Canon that permits soldiers to invade Churches? What **tradition is there allowing counts and ignorant eunuchs to exercise authority in Ecclesiastical matters, and to make known by their edicts the decisions of those who bear the name of Bishops?** He is guilty of all manner of falsehood for the sake of this unholy heresy" (Athanasius, History of the Arians, Part 7, 51).

We do not deny that Athanasius appeals to Canons and tradition as a source of divine authority. But this is post Nicene Creed and the "rule of faith" made popular by Irenaeus and Tertullian 125 years earlier, has now flowered into a written document that is seen to have the same authority of scripture. We also agree that there were many canons that

legislated many organizational and liturgical matters that were not found in scripture. But none of them represent a "distinct doctrine" as much as they represent detailed rules to govern existing doctrines. If the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches point to these Canons and tradition as a source of divine extra-biblical authority, we would ask, why is Nicea the first time we hear about them? If these Canons and tradition are "divine rules practiced by the apostles" then why did later councils and creeds modify and reverse decisions of earlier councils and canons? Our whole point is that creed making, is the source of religious division, not the solution. Rather than getting progressively more complex with time, why not just stick with what the Bible says. It is quite certain that the Arians would have been exposed as false teachers had the Nicene or any creed not been written! Creed making seems to solve one problem but in fact creates a whole series of new ones!

7. "6. For not only in outward form did **those wicked men** dissemble, putting on as the Lord says sheep's clothing, and appearing like unto whited sepulchres; but **they took those divine words in their mouth, while they inwardly cherished evil intentions**. And the first to put on this appearance was the serpent, the inventor of wickedness from the beginning—the devil,—who, in disguise, conversed with Eve, and forthwith deceived her. But after him and with him are all inventors of unlawful heresies, who indeed refer to the Scriptures, **but do not hold such opinions as the saints have handed down, and receiving them as the traditions of men**, err, because they do not rightly know them nor their power. **Therefore Paul justly praises the Corinthians [1 Cor 11:2] , because their opinions were in accordance with his traditions**. And the Lord most righteously reproved the Jews, saying, 'Wherefore do ye also transgress the commandments of God on account of your traditions.' For they changed the commandments they received from God after their own understanding, **preferring to observe the traditions of men**. And about these, a little after, the blessed Paul again gave directions to the Galatians who were in danger thereof, writing to them, 'If any man preach to you aught else than that ye have received, let him be accursed.' ... "7. Again we write, **again keeping to the apostolic traditions**, we remind each other when we come together for prayer; and **keeping the feast in common, with one mouth** we truly give thanks to the Lord" ... "8. We begin the fast of forty days on the 13th of the month Pharmoth (Mar. 9). After we have given ourselves to fasting in continued succession, let us begin the holy Paschal week on the 18th of the month Pharmuthi (April 13). Then resting on the 23rd of the same month Pharmuthi (April 18), and keeping the feast afterwards on the first of the week, on the 24th (April 19), let us add to these the seven weeks of the great Pentecost" (Athanasius, Festal Letters, Easter, Letter 2. For 330, 6,7,8)

Athanasius is engaged in the "Easter wars". All this talk about "**apostolic traditions**" by Athanasius shows us that he really thought his tradition was the true and 1st century tradition. Yet the Latin/western church and the Greek/eastern churches were divided then and the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches were dare divided even today over which Easter Liturgy is really the true "**apostolic tradition**". Easter is not taught in scripture and none of the apostolic fathers knew anything about it! As we have seen, the early church [celebrated the resurrection of Christ every week on the day he rose: Sunday](#). We actually appreciate Paul's statement in 1 Cor 11:2, where he praises the Corinthians for "holding firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you." Paul was inspired,

no church leader today is inspired. I would make sure that I listened and imitated everything Paul said just like the Corinthians did! What is amazing about this passage by Athanasius, is that it is basically his "sales pitch" for the people to do Easter HIS WAY, and not the way other churches were doing it. Obviously appealing to current tradition doesn't work! The solution to the Easter wars, was to abolish easter altogether, since it wasn't important enough for any of the apostles to mention it in scripture!

8. "Let this, then, **Christ-loving man**, be our offering to you, just for a rudimentary sketch and outline, in a short compass, of the faith of Christ and of His Divine appearing to usward. But you, taking occasion by this, if you **light upon the text of the Scriptures, by genuinely applying your mind to them, will learn from them more completely and clearly the exact detail of what we have said.** For they were spoken and written by God, through men who spoke of God. **But we impart of what we have learned from inspired teachers who have been conversant with them,** who have also become martyrs for the deity of Christ, to your zeal for learning, in turn. (Athanasius, On the Incarnation of the Word, 56)

Whereas the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches teach that only the church can correctly interpret the Bible, Athanasius really believed that scripture was understandable by the common man by simply reading it (Eph 3:3-5)! Notice it is addressed to the "Christ-loving man", to all! This kind of statement from Athanasius, should be troubling for Catholics and Orthodox alike, since, **he is the a church leader** who is not supposed to ask us to use our own powers of interpretation to know truth, he is supposed to interpret it for us and just tell us his opinions!

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

350 AD: Hilary of Poitiers:

1. "Such is their error, such their pestilent teaching; **to support it they borrow the words of Scripture, perverting its meaning** and using the ignorance of men as their opportunity of gaining credence for their lies. Yet it is certainly **by these same words of God that we must come to understand the things of God.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book IV, 14)

An amazing text that refutes the Roman Catholic and Orthodox apologists claim that the church refuted heresy with "tradition" because they found that arguing scripture with the heretics futile, since the heretics also quoted scripture. Here we see as late as 350 AD, the church realized that the word of God, not tradition, was the source of how to "**understand the things of God**".

2. But **now let us continue our reading of this Scripture, to shew how the consistency of truth is unaffected by these dishonest objections.** (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 5, 9)

Contrary to the claims of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, even after the Nicene creed, the church still used scripture as the primary force against the false doctrine of the Arians!

3. "Having therefore **held this faith from the beginning**, and being resolved to hold it to the end in the sight of God and Christ, we say anathema to every heretical and perverted sect, and **if any man teaches contrary to the wholesome and right faith of the Scriptures**, saying that there is or was time, or space, or age before the Son was begotten, let him be anathema. And if any one say that the Son is a formation like one of the things that are formed, or a birth resembling other births, or a creature like the creatures, and not as the divine Scriptures have affirmed in each passage aforesaid, or teaches or proclaims as the Gospel anything else than what we have received: let him be anathema. **For all those things which were written in the divine Scriptures by Prophets and by Apostles we believe and follow truly and with fear.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Councils, or the Faith of the Easterns, 30)

Hilary equates, the "**faith from the beginning**" with "**faith of the Scriptures**" and saw no difference.

4. "**Ignorance of prophetic diction and unskillfulness in interpreting Scripture** has led them into a perversion of the point and meaning of the passage." (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 1, 35)

Notice how Hilary expected the heretics to be able to understand the scriptures correctly! A Roman Catholic or Orthodox would never say this. Instead, they would say, "The reason the heretics are wrong, is the fact that it is impossible for them to understand the scriptures because only the church can correct interpret the Bible"! If Hilary were Roman Catholic, he would have said, "Its not because of your "ignorance and lack of skill" it's the fact that you are trying at all! Just ask me what the correct interpretation is!" Or even simpler, "Be silent heretic, and read the Nicene creed for yourself!"

5. "In order to solve as easily as possible this most difficult problem, **we must first master the knowledge which the Divine Scriptures** give of Father and of Son, that so we may speak with more precision, as dealing with familiar and accustomed matters." (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 3, 2)

Hilary again shows that the individual skill can make a difference in properly understanding the Bible whether you are in the church or a heretic! His solution to the Arian controversy was in the scripture, not the Nicene creed.

6. "Such suggestions are **inconsistent with the clear sense of Scripture.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 4, 16)
"There is no room for deception; **the words of Scripture are clear**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 4, 32)

Hilary again states that the Bible is understandable! He dismisses the heretics, not because they can't understand the Bible, but because their doctrines are contrary to the "clear sense of Scripture". The Bible is clear! Its easy to understand! Hilary wonders why the Arians cannot see it? The Orthodox and Roman Catholics teach that the Bible is a veiled document that only becomes clear to the leaders.

7. Their treason involves us in **the difficult and dangerous position of having to make a definite pronouncement, beyond the statements of Scripture,** upon this grave and abstruse matter. (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 2, 5)

Hilary states going "**beyond the statements of Scripture**" as a being "**difficult and dangerous**". While we feel it would have been better in the "Arian wars" for even the Nicene Fathers to simply maintain the personality of the Holy Spirit and the uncreated divinity of Christ, at least it bothered Hilary to venture into area where the scriptures were silent, like the question of whether Jesus was made up of the same stuff as the Father or not, in trying to explain the fact that God is three and one. Hilary echoes what Paul said in 1 Cor 4:6 "learn not to exceed what is written". If Hilary were Roman Catholic or Orthodox, he never make such a statement because of the separate witness of Tradition they rely upon. Notice that even though Hilary had the Nicene creed, he still used scripture, not "tradition" to prove the truth!

8. "Now that **we have exposed their plan of belittling the Son under cover of magnifying the Father,** the next step is to listen to the exact terms in which they express their own belief concerning the Son. For, since **we have to answer in succession each of their allegations and to display on the evidence of Holy Scripture the impiety of their doctrines**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 4, 11)

Wow, we love this statement by Hilary! He sounds quite "un-Catholic" and rather "Protestant" in his scriptural "proof-texting" to refute the Arians! On every little point the Arians taught, Hilary proved them wrong, not from the Nicene Creed that was now 25 years old, but from the scriptures!

9. "Yet it is well for us to know all that has been revealed upon the subject, for though we are not responsible for the words of Scripture, **yet we shall have to render an account for the sense we have assigned to them.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 4, 19)

If the church is the infallible interpreter of Scripture as directed by the Holy Spirit, why would Hilary worry about the interpretation? Obviously then, each individual is responsible for the way they interpret scripture!

10. "And now, although **we have found the sense of Scripture, as we understand it, in harmony with the conclusions of ordinary reason**, the two agreeing that equality is incompatible either with diversity or with isolation, yet we must seek a fresh support for Our contention from actual words of our Lord. For only so can we check that licence of **arbitrary interpretation** whereby these bold traducers of the faith would **even venture to cavil [raise trivial objections] at the Lord's solemn self-revelation.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 7, 16)

Another powerful statement by Hilary that the scriptures are to be interpreted by the individual. Notice he does not say, "we are the church, we have the Holy Spirit to guide our interpretation", but "as we understand it". He also says that the natural reading of scripture is enough. Why do the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches think that what they write is understandable with "ordinary reason", but what God writes is confusing to all unless you are the Pope? If non-Catholics cannot understand the Bible apart from "God's organization", because the scripture is veiled to the common man, why would they expect the common man to understand their defense of doctrine? Yet Orthodox and Catholic defenders think they are better skilled at writing religious literature than God! For only in their writings can man understand truth!

11. "The **Scripture is accurate and consistent**; we detect no such confusion as the plural used of the One God and Lord" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 4, 28)

Hilary takes confidence in the scriptures when he refuted the Arians who taught Jesus was a creature!

12. "And it is obvious that these dissensions concerning the faith result from a distorted mind, which twists the words of Scripture into conformity with its opinion, **instead of adjusting that opinion to the words of Scripture.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 7, 4)

Notice how different Hilary sounds from Catholics and Orthodox: They want heretics to adjust their views to the traditions of the church, or whatever the Pope or the priest teaches, but Hilary pointed them straight to scripture and expected the Bible to be the final authority.

13. "This is no unsupported statement of his own, which might lead to error, but a warning to us to confess that Christ died and rose after a real manner, not a nominal, since the fact **is certified by the full weight of Scripture authority**; and that we must understand His death **in that exact sense in which Scripture declares** it. In his regard for the perplexities and scruples of the weak and sensitive believer, he adds these solemn concluding words, **according to the Scriptures**, to his proclamation of the death and the resurrection. He would not have us grow weaker, driven about by every wind of vain doctrine, or vexed by empty subtleties and false doubts: he would summon faith to return, before it were shipwrecked, to the haven of piety, believing and confessing the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Son of Man and Son of God, **according to the Scriptures**, this being the safeguard of reverence against the attack of the adversary, so to understand the death and

resurrection of Jesus Christ, as it was written of Him. There is no danger in faith: the reverent confession of the hidden mystery of God is always safe. Christ was born of the Virgin, but conceived of the Holy Ghost *according to the Scriptures*. Christ wept, but *according to the Scriptures*: that which made Him weep was also a cause of joy. Christ hungered; but *according to the Scriptures*, He used His power as God against the tree which bore no fruit, when He had no loath Christ suffered: but *according to the Scriptures*, He was about to sit at the right hand of Power. He complained that He was abandoned to die: but *according to the Scriptures*, at the same moment He received in His kingdom in Paradise the thief who confessed Him. He died: but *according to the Scriptures*, He rose again and sits at the right hand of God. In the belief of this mystery there is life: **this confession resists all attack.**" (Hilary of Poitiers, On the Trinity, Book 10, 67)

Notice how Hilary engages in "proof-texting"! After each statement of faith, he refers the reader, not to some human creed, council or the authority of the church, but to the scriptures themselves! He feels that the scriptures, not some creed, are able to "resists all attack" from heretics! He speaks of how his doctrine is "certified by the full weight of Scripture authority" and is "that exact sense in which Scripture declares". Hilary sure doesn't sound like a Catholic or Orthodox! Why does he not say, "forget what the Bible says" you can't understand it anyway... the church currently teaches..."

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

- Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!
- Request FREE Bible study course by Email
- Information about who we are!
- Assembly locations of Christians near you.
- Telephone hotlines in your own home town.
- Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

360 AD: Cyril of Jerusalem:

1. Have thou ever in thy mind **this seal**, which for the present has been lightly touched in my discourse, by way of summary, but shall be stated, should the Lord permit, **to the best of my power with the proof from the Scriptures**. For **concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the Faith, not even a casual statement must be delivered without the Holy Scriptures**; nor must we be drawn aside by mere plausibility and artifices of speech. Even to me, who tell thee these things, give not absolute credence, **unless thou receive the proof of the things which I announce from the Divine Scriptures**. For this salvation which we believe depends not on ingenious reasoning, **but on demonstration of the Holy Scriptures**. (Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lecture 4, 17)



What an incredible statement! Cyril sure sounds like one of us "good 'ol Bible thumping Protestants"! He sure doesn't sound very "Catholic or Orthodox". Although he knew of creeds and canons, was himself a Bishop of authority, he demanded, "**proof from the Scriptures**" and "**demonstration of the Holy Scriptures**" for every doctrine! He highlighted the need to obey God's silence in the scriptures by saying: "**not even a casual statement must be delivered without the Holy Scriptures**".

2. "But in learning the Faith and in professing it, acquire and keep that only, which is now delivered to thee by the Church, **and which has been built up strongly out of all the Scriptures**. For since all cannot read the Scriptures, some being hindered as to the

knowledge of them by want of learning, and others by a want of leisure, in order that the soul may not perish from ignorance, we comprise the whole doctrine of the Faith in a few lines. This summary I wish you both to **commit to memory when I recite it**, and to rehearse it with all diligence among yourselves, not writing it out on paper, but engraving it by the memory upon your heart, taking care while you rehearse it that no Catechumen chance to overhear the things which have been delivered to you. I wish you also to keep this as a provision through the whole course of your life, and beside this to receive no other, neither if we ourselves should change and contradict our present teaching, nor if an adverse angel, *transformed into an angel of light* should wish to lead you astray. *For though we or an angel from heaven preach to you any other gospel than that ye have received, let him be to you anathema*. **So for the present listen while I simply say the Creed, and commit it to memory; but at the proper season expect the confirmation out of Holy Scripture of each part of the contents. For the articles of the Faith were not composed as seemed good to men; but the most important points collected out of all the Scripture make up one complete teaching of the Faith.** And just as the mustard seed in one small grain contains many branches, so also this Faith has embraced in **few words all the knowledge of godliness in the Old and New Testaments**. Take heed then, brethren, and **hold fast the traditions which ye now receive, and write them on the table of your heart**. Guard them with reverence, lest per chance the enemy despoil any who have grown slack; or lest some heretic pervert any of the **truths delivered to you**. (Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechetical Lecture 5, 12-13)

Cyril instructs men to memorize the Nicene creed. He states, 25 years after the creed was written, exactly what we say, namely that these creeds do not represent, "extra-Biblical oral tradition of the apostles" but a summary based directly and solely on scripture itself! Cyril says "**confirmation out of Holy Scripture of each part of the contents. For the articles of the Faith were not composed as seemed good to men; but the most important points collected out of all the Scripture make up one complete teaching of the Faith**". Cyril applies 2 Thess 2:15, "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word *of mouth* or by letter from us." to the very process of memorizing this creed. It must be most unsettling for Roman Catholic and Orthodox defenders to learn that Cyril identifies Tradition as "the scripture". The Nicene creed certainly cannot be used by these defenders as proof of "extra-Biblical oral tradition of the apostles", because Cyril comes right out and tells us that the creed originated directly from scripture, clause by clause! Cyril, views the creed as an exact but condensed replica of scripture! All creed makers, view their creeds as a scripture substitute! Memorizing this creed, which is scripture, is how you "hold fast the traditions" (2 Thess 2:15) this is how you "write them on the table of your heart" (2 Cor 3:3). So in the end, we do have an oral tradition here that is written on the heart: Nothing other than what we find in scripture. This must be most unsettling for Catholic and Orthodox apologists who search desperately for some "extra-Biblical oral tradition of the apostles".

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

Proof Texts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site LINK to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

370 AD: Basil: Tradition Wars: Let Scripture Decide!

1. "What then? After all these efforts were they tired? Did they leave off? Not at all. **They are charging me with innovation**, and base their charge on my confession of three hypostases, and blame me for asserting one Goodness, one Power, one Godhead. In this they are not wide of the truth, for I do so assert. Their **complaint is that their custom does not accept this, and that Scripture does not agree**. What is my reply? I do not consider it fair that the custom which obtains among them should be regarded as a law and rule of orthodoxy. **If custom is to be taken in proof of what is right, then it is certainly competent for me to put forward on my side the custom which obtains here**. If they reject this, we are clearly not bound to follow them. **Therefore let God-inspired Scripture decide between us; and on whichever side be found doctrines in harmony with the word of God, in favour of that side will be cast the vote of truth.**" (Basil, Letter 189, 3)

What a "flagship passage"! Every Roman Catholic and Orthodox priest should be required to hand scribe this text by Basil on parchment, rolled up and placed in a little clear bottle and hung around their neck! For the Roman Catholics who refuse to believe that such words could fall from the lips of a Catholic bishop, the Pope describes Basil as, "one of the most distinguished Doctors of the Church". One side of the debate cried, "my tradition is right". The other side replied, "No, our tradition is right". But Basil says something far more important, "**custom is to be taken in proof of what is right**", except in those cases when the opponent reject this custom. Basil continues, in this case, "**let God-inspired Scripture decide between us; and on whichever side be found doctrines in harmony with the word of God, in favour of that side will be cast the vote of truth.**" We do not dispute that Basil clearly believes that "church tradition" is authoritative, (ie. something that has been practiced for a long time should take precedence over some new doctrine.) But Basil's next statement should send chills up the spine of Orthodox and Catholic leaders. Basil says that when unity cannot be attained by first appealing to "church tradition", then the highest court of appeal is to debate the matter directly from scripture! This is exactly what Protestants have been saying all along! Furthermore, Catholic and Orthodox bishops are forbidden to even debate Protestants! Sure some powerless but ambitious pew-dwelling Catholic might want to debate, but what's the point, when they don't even believe they can even understand the scriptures themselves! But Protestants know just how easy it is to defeat such "defenders of Orthodoxy" in scriptural debates. In the end, Basil gives good advice to all Catholics who just say, "the Pope is right, forget the scriptures".

2. "**What our fathers said, the same say we**, that the glory of the Father and of the Son is common; wherefore we offer the doxology to the Father *with* the Son. But we do not rest only on the fact that **such is the tradition of the Fathers; for they too followed the sense of Scripture, and started from the evidence which, a few sentences back, I deduced from Scripture** and laid before you. For "the brightness" is always thought of with "the glory," "the image" with the archetype, and the Son always and everywhere together with the Father; nor does even the close connexion of the names, much less the nature of the things, admit of separation" (Basil, On The Spirit, ch 7, 16)

Once again, we see Basil using scripture, not some distinct oral tradition for the foundation of his views.

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

- Start here
- Defending the Bible
- Sola Scriptura Debates
- Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura
- Stumper Questions
- All Creeds Dangerous
- Traditions Dangerous
- Church Illuminated
- 100 AD
- 27 Book Bible Canon
- Sola Scriptura**
- Read Bible to Understand
- Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!
Request FREE Bible study course by Mail
Information about who we are!
Assembly locations of Christians near you.
Telephone hotlines in your own home town.
Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.





[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

375 AD: Gregory of Nyssa:

1. "But while the latter proceeded, on the subject of the soul, as far in the direction of supposed consequences as the thinker pleased, we are not entitled to such license, I mean that of affirming what we please; **we make the Holy Scriptures the rule and the measure of every tenet; we necessarily fix our eyes upon that, and approve that alone which may be made to harmonize with the intention of those writings.**" (Gregory of Nyssa, On the Soul and the Resurrection)

2. "on the other hand, even if our reasoning be found unequal to the problem, **we must keep for ever, firm and unmoved, the tradition which we received by succession from the fathers,** and seek from the Lord the reason which is the advocate of our faith: and if this be found by any of those endowed with grace, we must give thanks to Him who bestowed the grace; but if not, we shall none the less, on those points which have been determined, **hold our faith unchangeably.** (Gregory of Nyssa, On "Not Three Gods")

3. "**The Christian Faith, which in accordance with the command of our Lord** has been preached to all nations by His disciples, is neither of men, nor by men, but by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who being the Word, the Life, the Light, the Truth, and God, and Wisdom, and all else that He is by nature, for this cause above all was made in the likeness of man, and shared our nature, becoming like us in all things, yet without sin. He was like us in all things, in that He took upon Him manhood in its entirety with soul and body, so that our salvation was accomplished by means of both:-He, I say, appeared on earth and "conversed with men ," **that men might no longer have opinions according to their own notions about the Self-existent, formulating into a doctrine the hints that come to them from vague conjectures,** but that we might be convinced that God has truly been manifested in the flesh, and believe that to be the only true "mystery of godliness ," which was **delivered to us by the very Word and God,** Who by Himself spake to His Apostles, and that we might receive the teaching concerning the transcendent nature of the Deity which is given to us, as it were, "through a glass darkly " **from the older**

Scriptures, -from the Law, and the Prophets, and the Sapiential Books, as an evidence of the truth fully revealed to us, reverently accepting the meaning of the things which have been spoken, **so as to accord in the faith set forth by the Lord of the whole Scriptures, which faith we guard as we received it, word for word, in purity, without falsification, judging even a slight divergence from the words delivered to us an extreme blasphemy and impiety.** We believe, then, even as the Lord set forth the Faith to His Disciples, when He said, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This is the word of the mystery whereby through the new birth from above our nature is transformed from the corruptible to the incorruptible, being renewed from "the old man," "according to the image of Him who created" at the beginning the likeness to the Godhead. **In the Faith then which was delivered by God to the Apostles we admit neither subtraction, nor alteration, nor addition, knowing assuredly that he who presumes to pervert the Divine utterance by dishonest quibbling, the same "is of his father the devil," who leaves the words of truth and "speaks of his own," becoming the father of a lie. For whatsoever is said otherwise than in exact accord with the truth is assuredly false and not true.** (Gregory of Nyssa, Against Eunomius, Book 2, 1)

A fabulous statement on scripture! **"In the Faith then which was delivered by God to the Apostles we admit neither subtraction, nor alteration, nor addition"**.

4. "But inasmuch as, since we composed that written defence of our conduct, again some of the brethren who are of one mind with us **begged us to make separately with our own lips a profession of our faith, which we entertain with full conviction, following as we do the utterances of inspiration and the tradition of the Fathers,** we deemed it necessary to discourse briefly of these heads as well. **We confess that the doctrine of the Lord, which He taught His disciples, when He delivered to them the mystery of godliness, is the foundation and root of right and sound faith, nor do we believe that there is aught else loftier or safer than that tradition. Now the doctrine of the Lord is this: "Go,"** He said, "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Gregory of Nyssa, Letter II. To the City of Sebasteia)

Gregory states that although his faith is based upon the scripture and the tradition of the Fathers, the scriptures are the **"foundation and root of right and sound faith"** and nothing else is **"loftier or safer than that tradition"**. For those who dispute our conclusion, we draw your attention to the fact that the phrase, **"We confess that the doctrine of the Lord"** refers directly to a quote from Matthew 28:18, **"Now the doctrine of the Lord is this: "Go,""**.

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

400 AD: Jerome:

1. "Don't you know that the **laying on of hands after baptism and then the invocation of the Holy Spirit is a custom of the Churches? Do you demand Scripture proof?** You may find it in the Acts of the Apostles. And **even if it did not rest on the authority of Scripture the consensus of the whole world in this respect would have the force of a command.** For many other observances of the Churches, **which are due to tradition, have acquired the authority of the written law,** as for instance the practice of **dipping the head three times** in the layer, and then, after leaving the water, of **tasting mingled milk and honey** in representation of infancy; and, again, the practices of **standing up in worship on the Lord's day,** and ceasing from **fasting every Pentecost;** and **there are many other unwritten practices which have won their place through reason and custom.** So you see we **follow the practice of the Church,** although it may be clear that a person was baptized before the Spirit was invoked." (Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8)



Jerome clearly believes that if the church in the entire world agrees on some doctrine or practice, it is as good as having a Bible verse in scripture and a binding command. We strongly disagree. Jerome even knew at the time he said this, that NONE of what he talks about in this passage like "**laying on of hands after baptism**" and "**drinking milk and honey**" after baptism, was universally practiced. And no one in the modern Roman Catholic or Orthodox church today does so either! What is most important here, is that the "unwritten customs and laws" that Jerome claims were handed down by the apostles, are all very trivial and optional matters like "**standing up in worship on the Lord's day**". Any Catholic or Orthodox defender who want to use Jerome as an example of a man who felt "unwritten customs and laws" are as binding as scripture are required to do all the things Jerome here identifies as "unwritten customs and laws". Otherwise they are as hypocritical as they are dishonest.

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

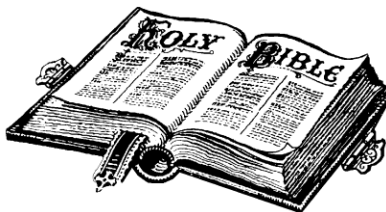
Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- Apostolic Fathers: [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- Apostolic Fathers: [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

405 AD: John Chrysostom:

1. "For doctrine." For thence we shall know, whether we ought to learn or to be ignorant of anything. And thence we may disprove what is false, thence we may be corrected and brought to a right mind, may be comforted and consoled, and if anything is deficient, we may have it added to us. "That the man of God may be perfect." For this is the exhortation of the Scripture given, that the man of God **may be rendered perfect by it; without this therefore he cannot be perfect. Thou hast the Scriptures, he says, in place of me. If thou wouldest learn anything, thou mayest learn it from them. And if he thus wrote to Timothy, who was filled with the Spirit, how much more to us!** "Thoroughly furnished unto all good works"; not merely taking part in them, he means, **but "thoroughly furnished."** (John Chrysostom, Homily 9, commentary on 2 Tim 3:16-17)

John, who is commenting on 2 Tim 3:16-17, clearly believes the scriptures are all-sufficient and nothing else is needed for truth. But he says something far more profound than modern Roman Catholic and Orthodox leaders cringe at: Chrysostom, interprets Paul's statement as saying that "the scriptures were given IN PLACE OF Paul". This is exactly what we are saying! We say that from 30 - 50 AD, revelation was 100% oral because none of the New Testament was written. Then from 50 - 100 AD scripture was completed. Finally from 100 AD to the second coming our final authority is the scriptures. God's whole plan was to start with inspired oral revelation, then part oral, part scripture, and finally when scripture was complete, it became the all-sufficient authority. We do not dispute that oral traditions continued after 100 AD, just that as time moved along, oral tradition by its very nature, became less important. Today oral tradition is utterly worthless since the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches both claim they are the right oral tradition, yet they differ so greatly in doctrine, that they are not even "in communion" with each other!

2. "For how is it not absurd that in respect to money, indeed, we do not trust to others, but refer this to figures and calculation; but in calculating upon facts we are lightly drawn aside by the notions of others; and that too, though we possess an **exact balance, and square and rule for all things, the declaration of the divine laws?** Wherefore I exhort and entreat you all, **disregard what this man and that man thinks about these things, and inquire from the Scriptures all these things;** and having learnt what are the true riches, let us pursue after them that we may obtain also the eternal good things; which may we all obtain, through the grace and love towards men of our Lord Jesus Christ, with Whom, to the Father and the Holy Spirit, be glory, might, and honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen." (John Chrysostom, Homily 13, commentary on 2 Cor 7:1)

Chrysostom calls scripture, "**exact balance, and square and rule for all things, the declaration of the divine laws**". We not only agree, but ask why this sounds so opposite to how Catholics describe the Bible.

3. ""So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by Epistle of ours." Hence it is manifest, that they **did not deliver all things by Epistle, but many things also unwritten,** and in like manner both the one and the other are worthy of credit. Therefore let us think **the tradition of the Church also worthy of credit.** It is a tradition, seek no farther. Here he shows that there were many who were shaken." (John Chrysostom, Homily 4, commentary on 2 Thess 2:15)

Chrysostom clearly believes in a divine oral tradition that teaches some things, not contained in scripture. While we would strongly disagree with Chrysostom on this point, we honestly admit that he seems to take such a view. After all, we know there was a gradual movement to emphasize church tradition over what the Bible says, and Chrysostom at 400 AD, may be indicative that things are changing in that direction. But in light of what Chrysostom has already said about the scriptures, we could only guess that the specific things that make up this "unwritten tradition" are insignificant and of a secondary importance. Like modern Catholics, Chrysostom merely makes the claim of "unwritten tradition" without ever really giving us a specific example. Provide us a specific list! Without such an example, we object that modern Catholics squeeze in all their extra-biblical doctrines. Jerome, who also lived at the same time as Chrysostom in 400 AD, does provide such a list in (Jerome, Dialogue Against the Luciferians, 8), like drinking "milk and honey" immediately after being baptized. So we can in fact prove our position correct, that much of the early church's "unwritten tradition" was over insignificant things like this. Further, neither the Orthodox or Catholic churches even do this today, which further proves that such "unwritten tradition" really involves what we call "expedient tradition".

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

- Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!
- Request FREE Bible study course by Mail
- Information about who we are!
- Assembly locations of Christians near you.
- Telephone hotlines in your own home town.
- Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.
- Start here
- Defending the Bible
- Sola Scriptura Debates
- Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura
- Stumper Questions
- All Creeds Dangerous
- Traditions Dangerous
- Church Illuminated
- 100 AD
- 27 Book Bible Canon
- Sola Scriptura**
- Read Bible to Understand
- Holy Spirit Illumination
- SEARCH** this local site
- LINK** to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

425 AD: Augustine:

1. "Whereas, therefore, in every question, which relates to life and conduct, not only teaching, but exhortation also is necessary; in order that by teaching we may know what is to be done, and by exhortation may be incited not to think it irksome to do what we already know is to be done; **what more can I teach you, than what we read in the Apostle? For holy Scripture setteth a rule to our teaching, that we dare not "be wise more than it behoveth to be wise;"** but be wise, as himself saith, "unto soberness, according as unto each God hath allotted the measure of faith." (Augustine, On the Good of Widowhood, 2)

We don't question that Augustine, like Chrysostom and Jerome, believed in "unwritten customs and laws" passed down orally by the apostles. But as we have seen, these customs involve trivial matters like "drinking milk and honey after baptism". Having said this up front, we observe Augustine's attitude towards scripture. He clearly believes that we must abide within scripture. He comments that teaching more than scripture

2. "Receive, my children, **the Rule of Faith, which is called the Symbol (or Creed).** And when ye have received it, write it in your heart, and be daily saying it to yourselves; ... For this is the Creed which ye are to rehearse and to repeat in answer. **These words which ye have heard are in the Divine Scriptures scattered up and down: but thence gathered and reduced into one, that the memory of slow persons might not be distressed; that every person may be able to say, able to hold, what he believes.** For have ye now merely heard that God is Almighty? But ye begin to have him for your father, when ye have been born by the church as your Mother. (Augustine, On the Nicene Creed: a Sermon to the Catechumens, 1)

Augustine, like all the fathers, believed that every phrase in the Nicene creed had its origin in the scripture, not some "unwritten oral tradition of the apostles". He calls the creed, "**Rule of Faith**" which was first used by Tertullian in 200 AD. The age of creed making is in full bloom! Today, every major denomination, including the Catholic and Orthodox believe their creeds are based directly upon the Bible. This of course cannot be true since they contradict both one another and the Bible itself!

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!
Request FREE Bible study course by Mail
Information about who we are!
Assembly locations of Christians near you.
Telephone hotlines in your own home town.
Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here
Defending the Bible
Sola Scriptura Debates
Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura
Stumper Questions
All Creeds Dangerous
Traditions Dangerous
Church Illuminated
100 AD
Sola Scriptura
27 Book Bible Canon
ProofTexts
Read Bible to Understand
Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- **Apostolic Fathers:** [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

425 AD: John Cassian:

1. For the nature of gluttony is threefold: first, there is that which forces us to anticipate the proper hour for a meal, next that which delights in stuffing the stomach, and gorging all kinds of food; thirdly, that which takes pleasure in more refined and delicate feasting. And so against it a **monk should observe** a threefold watch: first, he should wait till the proper time for breaking the fast; secondly, he should not give way to gorging; thirdly, **he should be contented with any of the commoner sorts of food. For anything that is taken over and above what is customary and the common use of all, is branded by the ancient tradition of the fathers as defiled with the sin of vanity and glorying and ostentation.** (John Cassian, Book V, Of the Spirit of Gluttony, Ch 23)



Here we have dietary rules for monks called, "**the ancient tradition of the fathers**". This is a perfect example of how post apostolic man-made rules directly contradict the teaching of the New testament that says the Christian can eat anything he likes, common food or the food of kings, as long as it is accepted with prayer and thanksgiving. 1 Tim 4:1-4 actually calls John Cassian's diet rules, "doctrines of demons ... who advocate abstaining from foods".

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Sola Scriptura: The Bible Alone

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

Sola Scriptura

27 Book Bible Canon

ProofTexts

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK to this site**

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

Sola Scriptura: The Bible alone is enough!

Apostolic Fathers used scripture as the primary defense against false doctrine.



[Sola Scriptura home page](#)

- Apostolic Fathers: [Dates they lived and other information.](#)
- Apostolic Fathers: [Five kinds of Tradition.](#)



Mandatory: [Apostolic Fathers Catechism Class for Catholics and Orthodox.](#)

450 AD: Theodoret:

1. "I follow the **laws and rules of the apostles**. I test my teaching by applying to it, like a rule and measure, the **faith laid down by the holy and blessed Fathers at Nicaea**. If any one maintain that I hold any contrary opinion, let him accuse me face to face; let him not slander me in my absence." (Theodoret, letters, 40)

As we have seen from Athanasius (Athanasius, de Synodis, Part 1, 6), the church viewed the every phrase of the Nicene creed as being based directly upon scripture, not some unwritten oral tradition. So when Theodoret about 125 years later that he follows the "**laws and rules of the apostles**" AND "**the faith at Nicaea**" it surely doesn't provide the proof Catholic and Orthodox defenders are looking for. Yes Theodoret has a two fold authority: 1. the Bible and 2. the Nicene creed. But the creed is viewed by Theodoret as a condensed version of the Bible. We point out the folly of creed making. For although most of the Nicene creed is indeed accurate, the creeds that followed became progressively "less based upon the Bible" while men's allegiance increased. Creed are wrong because they complete with the authority of the Bible. Today Roman Catholics and Orthodox common folk, don't even both with the Bible, they just obey the creeds.

by Steve Rudd

Go To Truth **CLICK ON YOUR CHOICE**

Ask a Bible Question? Get a Bible Answer!

Request FREE Bible study course by Mail

Information about who we are!

Assembly locations of Christians near you.

Telephone hotlines in your own home town.

Contact E-mail study partner nearest you.

Start here

Defending the Bible

Sola Scriptura Debates

Apostolic Fathers & Sola Scriptura

Stumper Questions

All Creeds Dangerous

Traditions Dangerous

Church Illuminated

100 AD

27 Book Bible Canon

Sola Scriptura

Read Bible to Understand

Holy Spirit Illumination

SEARCH this local site **LINK** to this site

[Go To Start: WWW.BIBLE.CA](http://WWW.BIBLE.CA)

